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Labour society and politics in Cypus during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Katsiaounis, Rolandos

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LABOUR, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN CYPRUS
DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

ROLANDOS KATSIAOUNIS

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Limassol, May, 1996.

ABSTRACT

Under Ottoman rule Cypriot society was organised according to the Millet system, which designated the Greeks as an inferior race and accredited the Bishops as their political representatives. The organisation of the economy and the structuring of trades in a guild system contributed to the perpetuation of a stratified society. The inherent ideology of the poor included both invective against the social and political establishment and also acceptance of the establishment's perspective. The British occupation of 1878 and the introduction of European norms in administration removed the institutional supports of this corporate society and undermined the authority of the landed interest and the clergy. Labour became more independent as a consequence of new employment opportunities.

At the same time heavy taxation and usurious practices undermined the cohesion of a society of smallholders, creating opposition against both the Government and the money-lending establishment. The fabrique of Cypriot society began to break down, with the spread of disease, crime and a laxity of traditional morality. Amongst the labouring strata deviance was manifested by disrespect against higher authority, violations of the law and the phenomenon of social banditry. The social establishment and the clergy could still exercise considerable influence by retaining for themselves an image of paternal responsibilities toward the labouring poor and by promoting religious values to them.

Loyalties however were shifting due to the spread of a literacy based on Greek education, an anti-government press and the intervention of a new and nationalist middle class.

By the turn of the century a nationalist popular movement was able to challenge effectively the old conservative establishment, demonstrating that nationalism, and not religion, was to be the ideology according to which political issues would have to be settled thereafter.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I. Aim and Scope of the Thesis

The present study examines the process by which the opinions of Cyprus' labouring poor began to count as politics. More specifically it attempts to explain the underlying social basis of the political and national transformations which culminated towards the end of the 19th century, when the labouring people, led by a nationalist middle class, were able to pose a challenge to the social and political status quo. In the history of Cyprus the mass of ordinary people, whose voice was seldom reflected in the oratory of the politicians, or the effusions of the schoolmasters, tended to be lost sight of as an independent entity and to be presented in accordance with the opinions or interests either of their leaders or of their enemies. The thesis therefore endeavours to put at the forefront the elements making up the Cypriot sans-culottes - peasants, tradesmen and labourers - as social groups with their own identity, interests and aspirations.

The first part of the thesis focuses on the closing years of Ottoman rule in Cyprus, from the time of the Tanzimat reforms (1839-1856) to the British occupation in 1878. Since the previous century the framework of social and political life in Ottoman Turkey was provided by the Millet system, according to which Ottoman subjects were organised in empire-wide communities of the same confession or rite. Next to the dominant Muslim Millet the

Orthodox Christians, the Jews and the Armenians were designated as distinct Millets, whose members held a certain and defined status.¹ Cyprus, at the time of the first census, in April 3, 1881, almost three years into the British occupation, was inhabited by 186,173 souls.² Of these, 137,631 (73.9%) were Greek members of the Orthodox Church and 45,458 (24.4%) were Mohammedan Turks. There were also 2,115 (1.1%) Catholics, 715 (0.4%) Protestants, 179 (0.1%) Armenian Copts, 65 Jews and 15 Gypsies.³

A consequence of the religiously-defined status of Ottoman subjects was that in Cyprus, as in the rest of the Empire, Bishops and Primates in general were designated as Başs (leaders) of their Millet, or Ethnarkhes. Below the Prelates, a small circle of wealthy Kocabasıs (headmen) were allotted a certain status within Greek society, and the Ottoman order. Greek nationalism was the prerogative of a handful of bourgeois intellectuals, concentrated in the European consulates of the two port towns of Larnaca and Limassol. The Greek labouring poor, in town and country, lived in conditions of administrative and economic oppression; their political influence amounted to nil. The viability of the system was conditional upon the capacity of the Ottoman state to impose it and on the readiness of the lower or-

1. See a comprehensive description of the term in The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Volume VII, Leiden, 1990, pp. 61-64.

2. [C.-4264], Report on the Census of Cyprus, 1881, London, 1881, p. 6.

3. Ibid., p. 12.

ders to tolerate it. The Prelate-Kocabasi establishment for their part were anxious that the Greek labouring poor acquiesce to their station.

The thesis focuses on the Greeks. This is not because they were the majority, or even because of the comparatively thinner documentation regarding the Turks; no general history of Cyprus can be written as if the Greeks were the only community on the island. Yet the focus here is dictated by the topic and period covered by the thesis. As will be shown below, the Greek labouring poor were in a position to identify points of antagonistic interest in their society much earlier than their Turkish counterparts. Though peasants and tradesmen of both communities laboured in very similar conditions the Millet system allocated to the Turks definite political and legal advantages over the Greeks, who were designated as second class and tax-paying subjects, known as reayas. The Turks of Cyprus began to detach themselves from a mainly religious view of the world, as a result of the impact of secular Kemalist ideas in the 1920s and especially following their participation, along with the Greeks, in the labour movement, during the early 1930s. Their joint endeavours in transforming their social and political environment only became possible when class entered the field of forces of Cypriot politics.

The Tanzimat reforms, inaugurated in 1839, in attempting to modernise the administrative and financial system of the Empire signalled at the same time the crisis of the hitherto prevailing

social and political equilibrium. In Cyprus itself during this period politics became more fluid, new social conflicts began to develop and new classes began to emerge and take the field. For these reasons July 8, 1878, when Admiral John Hay landed at Larnaca declaring the occupation of Cyprus, by the British crown, though a milestone in the island's history is not the most suitable starting point for studying the popular movement which developed during colonial rule, and encompassed the majority of the labouring poor. The setting aside of the Millets, the reorganisation of legal, administrative and financial structures, and the introduction of a rudimentary representative system by the establishment of the Legislative Council, were all reforms whose full impact can only be appreciated if they are examined in the context of what had preceded them.

An additional reason for pushing the scope of historical inquiry one generation prior to the British occupation, derives from the fact that other changes, which were also significant, were not initiated by the arrival of the British rulers but had their origins in the Tanzimat era: the decline of corporate organisation in trades and of service and living-in labour in the countryside and the evolution of private property rights in land were well under way and were only confirmed with the occupation. The political tradition and inherent ideology of the labouring poor had been similarly fashioned in Cypriot society during Ottoman rule and were to carry on in the different environment of the colonial period. As this thesis examines not only the

progress of events but also the process of social transformations, the subdivision into chapters is thematic and not entirely chronological. Though the web of historical narrative may, to a certain degree, suffer by being divided into threads, such a division is necessary for practical purposes. It is dictated by the dual evolution: of Cypriot society on the one hand and of the national and social awareness of the lower strata on the other.

II. Sources and Methodology of Research

Our understanding of the ideas and activities of the labouring poor is hampered by the absence of ready-made material about them. The methodology of research has, therefore, been to seek out in the available sources, primary and secondary, all relevant clues and references, whether they be to the industrial classes, labouring strata, lower orders and even crowd and mob. The examination of conditions during the Ottoman period has naturally presented the greatest difficulties. Most of the relevant official documents are kept in the part of Cyprus which, since 1974, has been occupied by the Turkish army and is inaccessible to Greek Cypriots. However, research in primary sources for this period has been carried out in the Archive of the Archbishops of Cyprus (AAK). The Prelates were the only political leaders which the Greeks of Cyprus were allowed to have and their papers constitute a valuable source for a period otherwise badly lacking in information. The Historical Archive of the Greek Foreign Ministry (IAYE), containing the correspondence between the Greek Consulate

in Larnaca and the Foreign Ministry in Athens has also been utilised. This archive is rich in despatches on purely consular affairs - commercial matters and capitulations - though it also contains some very useful reports on the general situation of the island and, in particular, the affairs of the Greek community. A number of French consular papers have also been published in the Larnaca journal, Kypriaka Khronika (Cyprus Chronicles) [1924-1937]. A selection of mostly British consular documents, some of which had been published as Parliamentary Papers, were also edited by Dr. Theodore Papadopoulos.⁴

For the social and political climate during the Ottoman period the published reminiscences of Greek Cypriots, written up long after the events they describe, though not having the immediacy of letters and diaries actually written at the time, contribute significantly toward a fuller picture of social life during that period. Thus, in 1936 Costas A. Constantinides, the learned editor of the Nicosia newspaper Neos Kypriakos Phylax, published a total of 162 articles on the social and political life of the island during the closing years of Ottoman rule. The articles were based on the reminiscences of aged and prominent Cypriots, who had lived through that period. Another source of a similar nature is the description of Efstathios Paraskevas' boyhood years in Limassol, during the late 1860s and early 1870s, published in a series of issues of the newspaper Alithia during

4. Theodore Papadopoulos, Proxenika engrapha tou XIX [19'] aionos (Consular documents of the 19th century), Nicosia, 1980.

1937 and under the general heading Paleai Anamniseis (Reminiscences of Old). Finally, another description of Cyprus' society, as it was in 1878, is penned by British visitors and by the first British administrators, who were meticulous bureaucrats. Indeed, the preservation of a great deal of the written record of their labours, enables us to follow more closely the political and social development of Cyprus after 1878. Nevertheless, such archival material is patchy on social issues and frequently the available documents throw only indirect light on the social situation.

Newspapers, an obvious source of information, came out in Cyprus a few weeks after the occupation, when the first printing press was imported to the island. A fairly complete reading of the press of the period can be made through copies of these newspapers kept in the archives of the Department of Antiquities and the Archbishop Makarios Foundation in Nicosia and in the Newspaper Section of the British Library in Colindale. Published primary sources on the colonial period, which came out in London, include the High Commissioner's Annual Reports, Censuses, Parliamentary Papers and Hansard. The Cyprus Annual Blue Books, which contain a wealth of general information and statistical data, and the Cyprus Gazette, the Government's official newspaper, were published in Nicosia. The minutes of the Legislative Council, which was set up in August 1878, are kept in the Library of the House of Representatives in Nicosia.

Of British archives the documents at the Public Record Office, in series CO 67, include the correspondence between the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. As such, they enclose reports of senior officials on matters of regional or departmental significance, which the High Commissioner saw fit to forward to London. Of equal value, is the collection of the Secretariat Archive (SA1), kept in the State Archives, Nicosia. These documents are particularly useful for the 19th century, when newspapers were few and came out on a weekly basis; they include petitions and letters from the population to the authorities as well as reports of junior officials and policemen, who dealt with Cypriot society at grass roots level. A distinct series of 17 boxes, with reports of the first year of the colonial administration, only became accessible to researchers two years ago. Though documents in this series are still (April 1996) being re-arranged they have been used in the thesis in a way which would make it as easy as possible for their references to be traced.

Useful information and insights into the inherent ideology of the labouring population are provided by two 19th century authors. Their works, which are coherent pieces of scholarship, contain material which is today otherwise unavailable and can therefore be treated as primary sources. On the Turkish period, the most important author is Athanasios Sakellarios, a philologist from Greece, who worked as director of Larnaca's high school from 1849 to 1854. Sakellarios was the first modern lin-

guist and folklorist to describe the Greek Cypriots and their culture in his two volume work, Ta Kypriaka, which he published in Athens from 1855 to 1868 and revised in 1890 and 1891. Work of a similar nature during the early colonial period was carried out by a German author, Anna Ohnefalsch-Richter, who lived in Cyprus during 1894-1912, accompanying her husband, Max Ohnefalsch-Richter, in his archaeological excavations. M. Ohnefalsch-Richter had already worked in Cyprus from 1878 and had used his findings to draw attention to the island's Greek heritage. His wife, who was also well read in classics and ancient history, traced the same descent through the observation of the daily lives of the people. Her book, Griechische Sitten und Gebräuche auf Cypern (Greek Manners and Customs in Cyprus), published in Berlin in 1913, is at the same time a wealth of information on the attitudes of the classes making up Cypriot society and of the social tensions simmering in the manifestation of popular folklore.⁵

Locating the evidence in an appropriate historical framework, is another problem in the thesis. On the Ottoman period volume IV of Sir George Hill's A History of Cyprus, Cambridge, 1948 (1972), in spite of its limitations, is still unsurpassed in scope and magnitude. Hill also covered the British period, though in lesser detail. Writing in his eighties, he prepared what he described as certain detached essays, which formed the second part of the

5. For a translation in Greek, with an introduction, see Anna Marangou, Hellinika ithi kai ethima stin Kypro, Nicosia, 1994.

volume. In this work, which was published after his death by Sir Harry Luke, Hill was more concerned to expose the major sources of friction in the relations between the Government and the islanders than to analyse the internal affairs of the Greek community. Dr. George Georghallides' A Political and Administrative History of Cyprus 1918-1926, Nicosia, 1979, is a detailed and richly-documented work, covering the preceding period, 1878-1918, in outline, so as to expose the foundations of British rule. The author who wrote extensively on the years 1878-1910 is Philios Zannetos, a medical doctor and businessman, who served on the Legislative Council and who was Mayor of Larnaca. His history is a useful account of events and decisions concerning the Government, the Prelates and people like himself.⁶

For lack of adequate secondary sources, therefore, archival material has to be used not only for reconstructing the story of labour but also for covering major gaps in the island's general history. What is more the narrative of events has to be knit together in the face of a dominant consensus in Greek historiography locating Cypriot Prelates and the group of notables centred around them, in a great tradition of struggle for national emancipation during the Ottoman years, which continued unabated into British rule. On the other hand, historians in Greece and Europe, dealing with the movement for Greek independence, and the subse-

6. See specifically Philios Zannetos, Historia tis nisou Kyprou (History of the island of Cyprus), Larnaca, Vol. I, 1910; Vol. II, 1911; Vol. III, 1912.

quent efforts to redeem Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire, are much more cautious in their treatment of the senior clergy's role. Modern historiography acknowledges the fact that in pre-independence Greece, Rigas Velestinlis' and Adamantios Korais' efforts to instil into their compatriots the liberating spirit of Hellas, were at the same time efforts to redeem them from the Patriarchate's preaching for submission to the Ottomans, epitomised in the "Paternal Exhortation".⁷ Professor Paschalis Kitromilides has already called for a re-examination of the assumption which views the Orthodox Church as the champion of nationalism.⁸

In Cyprus the key element in the traditional and mainstream account of the Church's role in history has been singled out well by the official Cyprus Church historian, Dr. Andreas Mitsides:

The Orthodox Church of Cyprus has always been a national Church; the fate of the Church has always been identified with the fate of the people of Cyprus; the Church always supported and aided the national aspirations of the people...⁹

7. See the text of the exhortation in Richard Clogg ed., The Movement for Greek Independence 1770-1821, London, 1976, pp. 56-64.

8. P. Kitromilides, "'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans", Martin Blinkhorn and Thanos Veremis eds., Modern Greece: Nationalism & Nationality, Athens, 1990, p. 24.

9. A. Mitsides, I ethniki prosfora tis Kypriakis Ekklesias kata tin Tourkokratian (1571-1878) (The national contribution of the Church of Cyprus during Turkish rule), Nicosia, 1971, pp. 5-6.

The main reason for the resilience of these views is to be found in the peculiarities of Cyprus' history, where the clergy, up to this day, has retained much more political influence than their colleagues in Greece. In consequence, the prevalent consensus in Greek Cypriot historiography has traditionally been to dismiss "social" interpretations of history. Yet, a more thorough picture of historical developments and political movements would be obtained if they were viewed in the context of the fundamental social divide of the period. The examination of relations of production in a surplus producing economy, of wealth in land and property ownership in general and of the economic influence of the various social classes would help highlight the stakes in the political contests and draw up an accurate assessment of the popular and national movement in the island. In presenting the evolution and composition of this movement, how it behaved and what it hoped to achieve, the political events which are described in greater detail are those in which the decisive factor was the mass intervention of mainly ordinary men and women. The first is the jacquerie of August 1878, which was put down with the use of force by the British authorities. Following a relatively uneventful decade, the 1889 deputation of the leaders of the Greek community to London was undertaken only after the arousal of the population left little room for manoeuvre to leaders who wished to remain leaders. Another event is the despatch of nearly one thousand volunteers to the Greco-Turkish war of 1897, when the lower classes were, in an unprecedented

degree, engulfed in patriotic sentiment. Finally, a much more important occasion arose over the succession to the throne of the Archbishop of Cyprus, in 1900, where the showdown between radical nationalists and conservatives came out in the open.

III. A Note on the Theoretical Framework of the Thesis

The thesis draws extensively on the writings of several British historians who have examined political and economic issues in the context of the labouring poor from the 17th to the early 19th century. Although the focus of the thesis relates to a later historical period, the general backwardness of economic and social conditions in Cyprus made it possible to apply in the case of Cyprus, from circa 1850 to 1900, ideas and analytical concepts developed by scholars such as Professor Eric Hobsbawm and Professor George Rudé. Their work on primitive political movements and forms of protest during the formative years of the capitalist system has made it possible to approach these matters in a more detached and therefore more scientific way.¹⁰

The ideology and culture of the classes making up Cypriot society is also examined in the thesis, given that social contradictions were never a simple clash between economically opposed interests. In asserting their superiority, the senior clergy and lay Kocabasıs relied not only on the naked application

10. See particularly Eric J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels, Manchester, 1968 and George Rudé, Ideology and Popular Protest, London, 1980.

of forcible suppression but also on the establishment of their ideological hegemony over the mass of the population. This was countenanced by the labouring poor developing what might be described as a plebeian culture. The term, which has been put forward by the late Edward P. Thompson, is appropriate by evoking the awkward and unmanageable attitudes of the labouring poor toward the ruling classes, who observed them with contempt mixed with anxiety. This culture was a compound, guiding them to prudence and dependence toward the ruling classes as well as defiance against them. As such it was a culture at odds with the discipline inherent in the religious practices and style of life of the Ottoman period. It was also a source of resistance to the rules and morals of capitalist relations, as they developed in Cyprus after the British occupation.¹¹

The theoretical framework of E. J. Hobsbawm, G. Rudé and E. P. Thompson is utilised in the thesis only in a very general sense and in order to unravel, from primary sources, phenomena which would otherwise go unnoticed. At the same time this framework, having been developed from the British and Western European experience, has, in the case of Cyprus, to be handled

11. This specific aspect of Thompson's ideas is developed in four different works:

a) "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism", Past and Present, No. 38, 1968.

b) "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture", Journal of Social History, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1974.

c) "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class", Social History, Volume 3, No. 2, 1978.

d) "The Patricians and the Plebs", Customs in Common, London, 1991.

with a qualification. Unlike Britain which was, after the enclosure movement, virtually a land without a peasantry, Cyprus was a sea of smallholders. In Britain, popular grievances against lords and squires could be cushioned upon the intermediate stratum of tenant farmers, thus protecting the image of higher, and distant, authority. In Cyprus, oppression by the wealth of the rich and the power of the great were applied on the labouring strata directly, by Ottoman and colonial officials, tithe-farmers and money-lenders. The Ottoman Paşas (Governors), even the Sultans away in Constantinople, were not perceived as benevolent in the divide between Christians and Moslems but could only be fair within the framework of a system which designated the Greeks as inferior. Unlike an Englishman, therefore, an ordinary Greek in the Ottoman province was not freeborn and was protected by no Charta, magna or small.

A second, and related qualification, would contrast the position of the Cypriots with that of the labouring poor in Western Europe, who protested and revolted within states which were more or less sovereign. Though colonial rule represented, for the Greek Cypriots at least, a considerable improvement in their daily lives, their strive to freedom inevitably pertained to the development of their national sentiment and the demand that they be governed by their own people. In most accounts of Thompson, Hobsbawm and Rude the rich and great were speakers of the tongue and defenders of the faith of the humble folk. For the labouring poor of Cyprus, where their socially superior compatriots were

superior because of their visible identification with the regime, popular defiance against them entailed defiance against their alien rulers, and vice versa. By the close of the 19th century, for the mass of the Greek labouring poor, the urge to freedom came to be expressed in the demand for enosis, the incorporation of Cyprus into the Greek state; this was never a purely social or purely national phenomenon but was manifested as a dialectic unity of two mutually supplementary urges. Yet, in the historical accounts that have come down to us more than the lion's share has been allocated to the men of consequence, their role in events and their retrospective opinions about them. The labouring poor and their views were ignored, or taken for granted. The unravelling of their story constitutes part of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

THE ANCIEN REGIME UNDER OTTOMAN RULE

I. The Economics and Politics of the Church of Cyprus

In the province of Cyprus, within the framework of the Millet system, the senior clergy were the only leaders permitted to the Greek reayas.¹² The Church therefore performed a multitude of functions pertaining to a secular authority. Until 1839 the most important of these functions was the collection from the reayas of the taxes due to the Ottoman state.¹³ The Church had also been endowed by the Turks with very considerable property. Only part of this property consisted of rights to material things, such as fields or pastures. Within a system of decaying Ottoman feudalism, a considerable segment of this property still consisted of rights to revenue. These were backed by berats, charters from the state, which gave authority to the clergy to enforce their tithes upon the population. Zeteiai were paid directly by Christian villages to the Bishop making his annual round in the diocese. An inhabitant who would not give what had been assessed as his/her norm would be compelled to do so by the

12. On the position of the Prelates in Cyprus, during Ottoman rule, see generally Theodore Papadopoulos, "Orthodox Church and Civil Authority", Journal of Contemporary History, No. II, 1964.

13. See George Dionyssiou, "O phorologikos rolos tis Ekklesias tis Kyprou ton teleftaio aiona tis Tourkokratias" (The role of the Church of Cyprus in taxation during the last century of Turkish rule), Epistimoniki Epetiris tis Kypriakis Etairias Historikon Spoudon (Science Review of the Cyprus Society of Historical Studies), Vol. A', Nicosia, 1992, pp. 87-107.

Bishop's escort of zaptiyes (policemen). Canonica were a kind of ground rent on the produce of certain lands enclosing Christian villages; this tax was also obligatory and was collected by the Bishop's agents and the parish clergy, down to the last day of Ottoman rule.¹⁴

These were generous privileges granted by a conquering power. In return the Greek clergy proved to be a reliable ally against defiance to the central authority. In 1764 a rebellion led by Turkish officials and supported by discontented Greek and Turkish peasants, was crushed with the backing of the Church. Ten years later the support rendered to the Porte by the senior clergy and the Greek lay elite was decisive against the troublesome Hadjibaki Paşa. By 1805, when the Turks of Nicosia revolted against bread shortages, they did in effect find themselves rising against the Archbishop's entourage. The bloody suppression of the rebellion was not to be forgotten by the local Turks.¹⁵ In such circumstances a challenge from the Church against the state was unthinkable. The clergy needed the physical protection of the Porte, who had elevated them to effective power in the land. In 1815, a British visitor to the island, William Turner, noted on the position of Archbishop Kyprianos: "Cyprus, though nominally

14. See a description of the clergy's income in 1745 by the British Consul at Aleppo, Alexander Drummond, cited in Claude Delaval Cobham, Excerpta Cypria: Materials for a History of Cyprus, Cambridge, 1908, p. 280.

15. For a description of these events see generally Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 80-99, 104-110 and 355-358.

under the authority of a Bey* appointed by the Qapudan Pasha**, is in fact governed by the Greek Archbishop and his subordinate clergy".¹⁶

Five years later Kyprianos, having been made party to the aims of the Philiki Etairia, the secret society working for the liberation of Greece, would promise no support other than financial.¹⁷ There is no evidence that even this promise had actually been fulfilled. Hill notes that the resolution of the great assembly of the Etairia, on October 1, 1820, read as if the society had been doubtful of the Archbishop keeping his word.¹⁸ At the start of the Greek War of Independence, in the spring of 1821, Archbishop Kyprianos had, like Patriarch Gregory V, taken great care to maintain a correct attitude toward the Ottomans. Hence, in an encyclical of April 22, 1821, Kyprianos declared his loyalty to the Monarch and asked the people to surrender their arms to the authorities.¹⁹ Being resentful of the Greeks' wealth and power however, the Governor wrested a ferman (imperial edict)

16. * Ruler

 ** Minister of Marine.

 Cobham, Excerpta, op. cit., p. 447.

17. For the contact between Kyprianos and the Etairia see Emmanuel G. Protopsaltis, I Kypros eis ton agona tou 1821, (Cyprus in the struggle of 1821), Athens, 1971, pp. 14-15.

18. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 124.

19. "Engyklios epistoli tou Arkhiepiskopou Kyprianou pros tous iereis kai tous loipous Christianous" (An encyclical letter of Archbishop Kyprianos to the priests and the rest of the Christians), cited in Anon., I Helliniki epanastasi tou 1821 - Ekthesi keimilion (The Greek revolution of 1821 - An exhibition of relics), Athens, 1991, p. 40).

from Constantinople and, in an orgy of executions, eliminated the Archbishop, the senior clergy and 200 lay notables: nearly the entire Greek elite.²⁰ Professor Richard Clogg's observation on Patriarch Gregory V also holds true in the case of the leader of the Orthodox Church in Cyprus: he was executed not for having refused to denounce the revolt but in spite of having done so.²¹

The Turks did not go so far as to disestablish the Church which was, for another 18 years, permitted to carry on in the customary role of tax collector for the state. Rights to revenue from the population were also not tampered with, and the Church even embarked upon the process of recovery. For the Greeks as a whole however the slaughter of July 1821 was indicative of the ferocity that would meet any attempt to challenge Ottoman rule. For the elite in particular it was a reminder that they were but leaders of a subject people. The subsequent creation of the Greek state set in embryonic form, amongst an initially minute intelligentsia the notion that, within the framework of the Great Idea, espousing the reconstitution of the Byzantine Empire, the island would be rid of Ottoman oppression by being united to Greece.

20. For a description of these events see George Kephialades, Apomnimonevmata ton kata to 1821 en ti niso Kypro tragikon skinon (Memoirs of the tragic scenes of 1821 in the island of Cyprus), Alexandria, 1888.

21. Richard Clogg, "The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire", Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis eds., Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, Vol. I, New York, 1982, p. 193.

II. Iltizam and the Lay Kocabasıs

The weakening of the Church facilitated the rise in the status of the lay members of the Greek elite, the tax-farmers or lay Kocabasıs. Next to the dues received by the clergy, tax-farming rights were the second major type of rights to revenue. Under the prevailing tax system, known as Iltizam, wealthy men operated the concession by which the Government farmed out taxes, receiving an assured fixed sum and leaving the tax-farmers to make collections and retain the proceeds. Though these rights were not, as in the clergy's case, formally backed by charters, nomination to the small elite of tax-farmers was still a favour of the Paşa, bestowing great fortune and status. Once purchased, these rights to revenue normally carried life tenure and, being the prerogative of a small number of families, they amounted in practice to sinecures. So deeply entrenched were the tax-farmers' interests in the financial system of the Empire that for the men of the Tanzimat the effort to rationalise public finances proved to be their greatest failure. In spite of attempts at reform, which had begun in 1839, Iltizam had by 1855 been effectively restored. The Government, still seeking to curtail the influence of tax-farmers in the regions took measures by which holdings would be limited to the size of a village and would also have to be annually renewed. The attempt was ill-fated, given that tax-farmers, by grouping together, would overcome Treasury control.²²

22. See generally Stanford Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 6, October, 1975.

In Cyprus the failure of the reform was a mirror image of the Empire at large. Tax-farmers formed companies and were thus able to bargain for very large revenues. Where such arrangements were not feasible regulations were bypassed through bribes to the Agas (Turkish notables). Hence the tax-farming bourgeoisie, practically all of whom were Greeks, were a major force opposing the application of the tax reform. In September 1878, four months after the British occupation, the Financial Commissioner, George Kellner, gave a detailed account of the tax-farmers' collusion with the authorities during the previous five years and concluded:

But though keen in their dealings with the peasantry, the tithe-farmers are slow in their own payments to the Government Treasury...Thus, the tithe-farmer makes his bargain with the Government when the crops are ripening, recovers his own obligations to the Government, and often evades them altogether. Although, under his bond, interest is payable on overdue instalments it is never enforced. An examination of the accounts revealed the existence of considerable arrear claims extending over several years, and for the most part irrecoverable now.²³

Tax-farmers were also allocated an increasingly important role in the administration of Greek communal affairs, such as taxation, health and education, starting with the establishment, in 1830, of a central Demogerontia (council of elders). This

23. [C.-2396], Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure in Cyprus for 1878-9, George Kellner, Financial Commissioner of Cyprus, "Memorandum on the Revenue and Charges of the Island of Cyprus for the Five Years from 1873-4 to 1877-8, under Turkish Administration", September 25, 1878, (London, 1879), p. 2.

body, which was presided over ex-officio by the Archbishop, comprised senior clergymen as well as the most prominent of lay Kocabasıs.²⁴ The Archbishop and two lay Demogerontes represented the Greek community in the Grand Council of Nicosia, whose establishment in 1856 confirmed in effect existing practices in the island's administrative system. The major responsibility of this council, which was dominated by the Agas and senior Turkish officials, was the allocation of concessions to tax-farmers.²⁵

In effect the main pre-occupation of the Greek elite, lay in extracting surplus out of the Greek labouring population for the benefit of themselves and of the Imperial Treasury. Not surprisingly therefore the Greek notables not only abhorred violent revolution but also disapproved of peaceful reform. Both decrees of the Tanzimat Reforms, in 1839 and 1856, were emasculated by the hostility not only of the Turks but also of the Kocabasıs and Prelates entrenched in the system.²⁶ On May 4, 1854, R. Doazan, French Consul in Larnaca, reported to his Ambassador to the Porte the opposition of the island's Turks to the reforms and added:

The wealthy and powerful amongst the Greeks are also discontented; the conditions of slavery in which they find themselves do not bother them. They have the means to dominate their co-religionists and to subdue them. The clergy in particular are inspired by these sentiments.²⁷

24. Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

25. See generally Dionyssiou, Phorologikos, op. cit., p. 101.

26. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 180.

27. The letter is cited in N. Kyriazis, "Agoniodeis emerai tis en Larnaki Evropaikis paroikias" (Days of terror for the European community of Larnaca), Kypriaka Khronika, 1937, p. 222.

In manner and outlook there was not much to distinguish the older Greek Kocabasıs from the Turkish Agas. At the top of the commoners' scale the Greek merchant magnates and tithe-farmers mixed with the Turkish aristocracy in salons and exclusive clubs, such as the luxurious Yeşil Cazino in Nicosia.²⁸ The reminiscences of E. Paraskeva include a vivid account of a social function in Limassol, with the participation of the elite of both communities, in the house of a Greek notable known as Pavlibey.²⁹ Having been granted a share in the administration of the island the Greek establishment watched jealously over their privileges. Archbishop Panaretos, though having condemned the nationalist uprisings of 1833, had, according to the historian Philippos Georghiou, been deposed because he had "ignored the other families, those of the Demogerontes or the more Turkish-leaning Kocabasıs [τας δημογεροντικὰς ἢ τουρκικώτερον κοτζαβασικὰς] and had fallen victim to their opposition".³⁰

28. For the close social relations between the two elites of Nicosia see the following articles in Neos Kypriakos Phylax:

- a) "Ta magazia tou Parouxi" (The shops of Parouxi quarter), May 28, 1936;
- b) "To Yesil cazino" (The Yeşil cazino) May 29, 1936;
- c) "O Pasas kai to Ramazani" (The Paşa and Ramazan), May 30, 1936;
- d) "Tourkoi megistanes kai Kocabasides" (Turkish magnates and Kocabasıs), May 31, 1936.

29. See in Alithia:

- a) "Prosopa kai symvanda kata to 1870 eis Lemeson - O Said Pasas eis Lemeson" (Persons and events during 1870 in Limassol - Said Paşa in Limassol), August 20, 1937;
- b) "Prosopa...- To spiti kai o khoros tou Pavlibey" (Persons...- The dance in Pavlibey's house), August 27, 1937.

30. Philippos Georghiou, Eidiseis historikai peri tis Ekklisias tis Kyprou (Historical information on the Church of Cyprus), Athens, 1875 (Nicosia, 1975), p. 125.

To the end of Ottoman rule there was no active body of bourgeois, with the will and means to assert their identity and their corporate interests. The most prominent merchants had received no more than the rudiments of education. Christodoulos Severis was one of the richest men in the regions of Nicosia and Kyrenia, whose knowledge of local affairs had prompted the British to appoint him as the first President of Nicosia's Municipal Commission after the occupation; yet a man of such influence was also known to be able to write with difficulty.³¹ Crude violation of the rules of grammar and syntax was common in the texts of contracts of the period. C. Constantinides has published one such document, certifying the establishment of a commercial firm in 1867, precisely in order to mock at the language used. The two contracting parties were no less than Michael Liassides, the agent of the Ottoman Imperial Bank in Nicosia, and G. Papadopoulos, the first Cypriot merchant to by-pass Beirut and trade directly with Britain.³² These merchants had not as yet adopted an appearance appropriate to their class; practically all prominent people in Limassol were known to dress in traditional Cypriot costume.³³ Even Christodoulos Hadjipavlou, founder of the

31. He was nevertheless good with figures. For his personal attributes see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Christodoulos Severis - Emboros kai dimarkhos" (Merchant and mayor), July 15, 1936.

32. Ibid., August 12 and 13, 1936.

33. Alithia, "Pos eida tin Lemeson kata to 1869 - Phoremata kai kalymmata andron kai gynaikon (How I saw Limassol in 1869 - Attire of men and women), July 16, 1937.

largest winery in Cyprus, was dressed in boots and breeches.³⁴

Consequently, there was no body of opinion that could be called middle class, as merchants were content to accept the values of a corporate and essentially aristocratic society. These values were based upon honour, the sanction of the law being as yet inadequate to ensure reliability in commercial dealings. Constantinides has commented on the honesty and integrity of the period, where merchants' accounts were kept only in order to help their memory since paper transactions were in any case not acceptable in court.³⁵ The prevalent code of honour was effective by being socially sustained through an ingrained traditional morality, quite alien to observers accustomed to the contractual economy of Western Europe. This code of honour was only valid amongst the members of the upper classes of both communities. The reayas were not conceived of as being worthy of natural justice or fair treatment. At the time of the British occupation, the Times correspondent in Cyprus noted the pointed social inequality bred through the Ottoman legal system:

The very evil of a corrupted justice has from the peculiar nature of the constitution of the law courts aided the assimilation of sentiment between the two divisions of the people and encouraged their fusion. The introduction of Greeks into the tribunals did nothing for the distribution of purer justice to the poorer Greeks; it failed in its object; but it achieved, in an indirect way, a wonderful object of another nature. It brought together Greeks and Turks in a governing union;

34. Ibid., "Prosopa...- Mia exekhousa physiognomia" (Persons...- An outstanding personality), August 20, 1937.

35. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Monadiki timiotis" (Singular honesty) March 24 and 25, 1936.

it set a common basis of action between them, a corrupt basis indeed mainly, but one still of that bad sort from which good may come. This was one of the quiet ways in which the immemorial barriers of national pride and religious antipathy were beaten down.³⁶

In cultural terms the obliteration of distinctions between the two elites seems only to have been arrested by the obstacles to intermarriage. What there was of a bourgeoisie seems to have been neither "rising" nor conscious of any economic frustration, which would guide them toward adopting a political stand against the Government or another class interest. On the contrary, the major merchant tax-farmers perceived themselves as an estate, holding a recognised place in a society held together by tradition and historically founded legitimacy of position. These attributes were manifest in a description by the Times correspondent of the first Bairam celebration held under British rule, in December 1878. In the Konak (Government House) the notables of Nicosia presented themselves to the High Commissioner, Sir Garnet Wolseley, "in accordance with immemorial custom, in four separate classes. First came the religious class; secondly the great men of the place; thirdly the officials; and fourthly and lastly, the merchants". The members of the first three classes, Moslems and Christians, appeared in solemn sobriety wearing their official uniforms. At the end of the procession

came the merchants, and among them it was not difficult to recognize faces that have become noteworthy in connexion with tithe-farmers' petitions. These

36. The Times, "Cyprus", November 5, 1878.

gentlemen, who are all rich in Cyprus, were arrayed in various sorts of European costume which evidently received little attention at their hands.³⁷

III. The Forces of Nationalism

Only in the two port towns of Larnaca and Limassol had there, by the end of the 18th century, developed a stratum of European oriented bourgeois, practically identical with the personnel of the merchant consulates. Many of them had arrived in Cyprus as early as the close of the 16th century, and had their origins in Smyrna, Constantinople and, by and large, the Ionian islands, then part of the Venetian Empire.³⁸ The Consuls, and those Cypriots who had been granted citizenship by the states represented by them, enjoyed the commercial and political benefits of the capitulations.³⁹ Their concern of public affairs, even if from a professional angle, made them aware of issues relevant not only to Cyprus but also to the world at large. Some of them even possessed small libraries, primarily of a utilitarian nature.

37. Ibid., December 12, 1878.

38. See generally Aristides Coudounaris, "I kathodos ton Heptanision eis Kypron (The arrival of Heptanesians in Cyprus), Kypriakai Spoudai, Praktika tou Defterou Diethnous Kypriologikou Synedriou (Society of Cypriot Studies, Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Cyprus Studies), Volume III [Γ'], Nicosia, 1987, p. 89).

39. Achilleas Aimilianides, "Diomologiseis kai pronomia ton allodapon en Kypro" (Capitulations and privileges of aliens in Cyprus), Kypriakai Spoudai, Vol. I, 1937, pp. 36-44.

Therein lay the roots of the peculiarity of Cyprus, in that its cultural and political life was more vigorous in the port towns than in the capital.

It was within the cosmopolitan community of Larnaca that the first stirrings of radical ideas, inimical to the Ottoman status quo, appeared in the island. In 1815, when the senior clergy's influence was at its apogee, the manifestation amongst the Greeks of masonic activity was excommunicated by the Church of Cyprus. Circumstantial evidence indicates that the denunciation had been aimed against the agents of the Philiki Etairia; the society had been founded in Odessa the year before and the overlap between its operations and Greek freemasonry of the period is well established. What is worthy of note however is the fact that Archbishop Kyprianos excommunicated the freemasons on the grounds not only of religious heresy but also of opposition to the Sultan's authority. The encyclical noted the following on their intentions:

The aforementioned oppose the decrees of the Sovereign and deserve to be put to death for everything they preach...We ought to urge the authorities to crack down on them, to arrest them in their meetings and councils and to punish them harshly...

And we extend a fraternal request to our brother...the Metropolitan Bishop of Kitium. We urge you dear brother to be on the alert about this matter, which is pit against not only our most sacred and pure faith but also against the wishes and commands of our King...⁴⁰

40. See the text as published by Theodore Papadopoulos in "Proepanastatiki parousia tou tektonismou en to Helliniko khoro" (The Pre-revolutionary presence of masonry in the Greek realm), Stasinou, Vol. III [Γ'], 1968, pp. 62-65.

The denunciation, which was in line with the stand of the Eastern Orthodox patriarchates toward French enlightenment and freemasonry, nipped in the bud the growth of radical nationalist ideas in Cyprus.⁴¹

Nationalist radicalism, with a popular base, raised its head once again in 1833, in three consecutive insurrections against the Ottomans. Island wide resentment at onerous taxation first burst in the town of Larnaca. Circumstantial evidence points to some association of the revolt with the wider conflict in the region, of the Sultan against the ruler of Egypt Mehemet Ali, who enjoyed France's support. Greek insurgents were joined by Albanians, temporarily stationed in the island, and even by discontented Turks. The revolt thus became an oddly assorted collection of forces and ideas standing for change.⁴² On March 2, 1833, in a letter to Constandios Sinaïou, Patriarch of Constantinople, Archbishop Panaretos referred contemptuously to the movement of "unwashed rowdies and certain Turks and Christians of the inhabitants of Scala and Larnaca and all the Europeans of the so-called third class".⁴³ These Jacobins were joined by the Greek

41. According to the historian Joannis Loukas, during the 19th century there had been no reaction against freemasonry comparable in intensity to that of the Church of Cyprus throughout the Greek world (Joannis Loukas, Historia tis Hellinikis masonias (History of Greek freemasonry), Athens, 1991, p. 175).

42. For the revolts of 1833 see generally Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 157-166.

43. The letter is cited in N. G. Kyriazis, "N. Thysefs kai i stasis tou 1833" (N. Thyseus and the revolt of 1833), Kypriaka Khronika, 1935, p. 164.

peasantry and the revolt spread to Paphos, Limassol and the Carpas. The insurgents were headed by spirited men: Joannikios, a Greek monk, and Lazimanos, a Turkish Imam (prayer leader). The latter, who was probably a Crypto-Christian, was also known by the subriquet Giaur (Infidel) Imam. The major rebel leader, Nicholaos Theseus, was a veteran of the Greek war of independence. He was also a failed trader, with commercial, and apparently ideological, links with Marseille - something that is of a nationalist malcontent.⁴⁴ The lay and clerical establishment however fiercely denounced the revolt; in a subsequent letter Archbishop Panaretos condemned

the calamitous movement [ολέθριον κίνημα] of the European officers, so-called supporters of liberty and of our nation, who were in fact given to subversion and corruption of humanity [ανατροπών και φθορέων της ανθρωπότητας].

For the Archbishop men such as Theseus, having been initiated "into the sacraments of rebellion" [τα μυστήρια της αποστασίας], were base and repugnant [βδελυρά ανθρωπάκια]. The same letter referred to the Sultan as "our most glorious King" [ενδοξοτάτου ημετέρου Ηγεμόνος] whose authority had defeated the leader of the Carpas peasants, the accursed [κατάρατος] Joannikios, and had him justly sentenced to impalement [πασσάλω την δίκην αξίως δόντας].⁴⁵

44. For the gravitation of such traders toward Greek nationalist activities see Richard Clogg, "The Greek Mercantile Bourgeoisie: Progressive or Reactionary", Balkan Society during the Years of Greek Independence, London, 1981, pp. 85-110.

45. The text of the undated despatch is cited in Philippou, Ekklesia, op. cit., pp. 217-218.

Though crushed by the Porte the revolt showed the potential power of Greek nationalism in unifying town radicals and discontented peasants. This was also the last time in which Turks and Greeks rose together against the central authority. Thereafter the development of Greek economic influence and national consciousness meant that collective action by ethnic groups in the capacity of ethnic groups was exclusively Turkish, aiming to preserve their privileges.⁴⁶ During the Crimean war, 21 years later, the spectre of radical nationalism was resurrected by the minute intelligentsia of the period. On March 14, 1854, R. Doazan, French Consul in Larnaca, reported to his Ambassador in Constantinople that three pamphlets with a patriotic content were circulating in Cyprus. The most radical was inspired by references to ancient Greece and to the revolutionary texts of French socialism of 1852.⁴⁷ Their import and distribution was blamed by the authorities on Epaminondas Frangoudes, a typical bourgeois intellectual of his time. He came from a family of merchants from Trieste, who had served in the French consulate in Larnaca. Having graduated from the Ionian Academy in Corfu, he became secretary of the Greek consulate in Larnaca and then master in Nicosia's secondary school.⁴⁸

46. On this point see Paul Sant Cassia, "Religion, Politics and Ethnicity in Cyprus during the Turkokratia (1571-1878)", Archives Européennes de Sociologie, Tome XXVII, No. 1, 1986, p. 24.

47. Doazan's despatch is cited in N. Kyriazis, "Ethnikon Kyprou fronima" (The national spirit of Cyprus), Kypriaka Khronika, 1931, pp. 20-21.

48. Aristides Coudounaris, Merikai paleai oikogeniai tis Kyprou (Certain old families of Cyprus), Nicosia, 1972, p. 108.

In the isolated Ottoman province this distribution of radical literature was the sole echo of the 1848 upheaval in Europe. It was silenced immediately. Consul Doazan added in his despatch of March 14, 1854 that Turkish fury terrified Archbishop Kyrillos I, who, "in a public confession of faith, protested his devotion to the Sultan and the following day hurled thunderous excommunication at anyone who would read pamphlets hostile to His Excellency..."⁴⁹ Establishment Greeks were also alarmed at the tendency of the bourgeois intelligentsia to import novel and subversive ideas. "Our relations with the ruling nation [to διακρατοῦν έθνος], are excellent" wrote Meletios, Bishop of Kitium, to the Archbishop 15 days after the events, adding gloomily that the people of the towns were being aroused by alien powers, deserving to incur God's wrath.⁵⁰

The political forces generated in the two port towns, so long as they were without roots in the mass of the peasantry, were nowhere strong enough to threaten Ottoman rule. At the same time the presence of consulates and of communities enjoying the protection of European powers curbed Turkish arbitrariness, to a degree, and allowed Christians in these towns to breathe more freely. A despatch of Paul Darras, French Consul in Larnaca, to the French Ambassador in Constantinople, on April 2, 1856, ex-

49. Cited in Kyriazis, "Ethnikon fronima", op. cit., p. 22.

50. "Ekdosis engraphon tis Arkhiepiskopis Kyprou" (Publication of documents relating to the Archbishopric of Cyprus), O Apostolos Varnavas, No. 119, July 15/27, 1923, p. 143.

emplified this contrast. Archbishop Makarios I, anxious at the announcement of the Second Charter of the Tanzimat Reforms, the Hatt-ı hümayun, had cautioned the Christians not to celebrate, and thereby irritate the Turks. This was in fact an article of faith not only for the Archbishop but also for the entire Christian population of Nicosia. The capital numbered 12,000 Turks, all of them Moslem fanatics, who were never found in the wrong by the authorities:

Slavery has bred slaves, who will not dare express their opinion when they realise that it is contrary to that of the Turks. This system of terror is reigning in Nicosia, a Turkish town, with medieval ideas, located in the interior of the island and without the presence of Europeans. The situation is quite different in Larnaca, where civilisation and education are much more advanced. Turkish threats do not bother the Christians who are protected from fanaticism and able to act freely, when they are on the straight path.⁵¹

IV. The Politics of the Greek Elite

Social stratification within a corporate society, which Cyprus was in Ottoman times, was reflected in the hierarchical political system of the period. Law making and executive authority were very much in the hands of the Turks, despite the fact that the Tanzimat had granted the members of the Greek establishment formal participation in local administrative affairs. Social relations apart these Greeks would have to know their place in terms of power politics. Writing in 1872, Theodoros

51. The letter is cited in N. Kyriazis, "To Hatti humayun tou 1856" (The Hatt-ı hümayun of 1856), Kypriaka Khronika, 1929, p. 242.

Peristianis, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaca, assessed the actual position of the Greek elite, District Administrative Councils, or Meclis Idare:

The Christian members, either owing to their political position or the fact that they are in a minority, have no significance whatsoever, yet their presence is conventionally accepted in these councils; they are subject to election only in theory. Though, according to the law, they are to be elected by the population of the district, this election is totally fictitious. The Governor General of the Island confers with the Kaimmakam*⁵² and they appoint as Councillors not those who are wanted and elected by the district but those who are designated by the Kaimmakam and from them again those approved by the Governor General...The vote of Christian councillors on relevant issues has no bearing at all; therefore, they either withdraw, leaving the ground to the Ottomans, or they unquestioningly rubber stamp what the Ottomans think fit.⁵³

The same picture is presented in a petition sent to Constantinople by the Greek inhabitants of Limassol district, dated April 18, 1878, less than three months from the British occupation. Harsh treatment was continuously meted out by the Turks to the Greek rural notables, that is the members of the village commissions, including the Muhtars (headmen). The petitioners added with regard to the status of these notables: "they enjoy no

52. * District Commissioner.

53. IAYE: 1872, File 58/3, "Geniki ekthesis statistikon kai allon pliροφοριον peri tis nisou Kyprou" (General report on statistical and other information on the island of Cyprus). Enclosed in T. Peristianis, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaca, to D. Voulgaris, President of the Council of Ministers in Athens, January 10, 1872.

respect and have no voice; they are in fact subject to the contempt, and swearing and whipping of the police and the Müdirs*".⁵⁴

Still, the Greeks belonging to the village commissions and Meclis Idare were prepared to suffer and tolerate such humiliations in the hands of the Ottoman Turks; this was the price of maintaining their positions, and in turn of exercising their own power over their poorer and weaker co-nationals and co-religionists. In 1869 the British Vice-Consul in Larnaca, Thomas Sandwith, reported that Muhtars were looked on as responsible for the due collection of taxes "but if they indicate one or more of the inhabitants who have failed to pay their portion of the tax, they can procure its levy in distress or have his defaulters imprisoned".⁵⁵ This dimension, of internal stratification and authority within the Greek community, was reiterated in a subsequent report by a British colonial official. In 1893, reviewing the history of Muhtars and village commissions as administrative institutions, the Queen's Advocate, A. F. Law, noted that during the Ottoman period these posts were coveted indeed - for serving the personal interests of their holders. The Muhtar enjoyed authority, by being responsible for the collection of taxes, and

54. * District administrators.

A copy of the petition is enclosed in IAYE: 1878, File AAA/Γ, D. Mavromichalis, Vice-Consul of Greece in Limassol, to Theodoros Deliyiannis, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Athens, February 20, 1878.

55. Cited in Sir Harry Luke, Cyprus under the Turks, London, 1969, p. 241.

kept a fee for performing this duty. Election and service to the post were located within the policing of the unruly lower orders by the rural establishment: "as the old Muhtars and commissions were always chosen from amongst the persons possessing the most property they had generally speaking a strong interest in keeping the blackguards in order". Finally the authority of these primates hinged on the support of the Turkish regime. The Queen's Advocate noted:

Even for a long time after the occupation it was usual when a person was brought down to be tried for a serious offence for a certificate to be obtained from the Muhtar and commission (which the old courts would generally have liked to treat as most material evidence in the case) stating either that the accused was a very bad character and it was desirable that he should be severely punished or that he was a good character and the Muhtar & commission hoped he might be acquitted or at least let off with a very light sentence.⁵⁶

Within the room left to the Greeks, maneuvering was rather active. The internal politics of their community revolved around the personal interests and ambitions of Prelates, lay notables and their families and as such were strongly clientelist in character. C. Constantinides has noted the division of the Greek community into two networks, of Old and Young middlemen and Kocabasıs.⁵⁷ The greatest contests were still waged over the choices for the posts of the Archbishop and the three

56. SA1:1277/1893, A. F. Law, Queen's Advocate, to Harry Thompson, Chief Secretary, September 2, 1893.

57. Neos Kypriakos Phylax:

a) "I palia Lefkosia" (Old Nicosia), January 13, 1936;
b) "Oi palioi kai oi neoi" (The old and the new), January 19, 1936.

metropolitan Bishops. Though with the inauguration of the Tanzimat reforms these posts became subject to a semblance of popular electoral procedures their outcome still reflected the balance of power within local factions. Dr. Costas Kyrris notes that "the said kojabashis were also the dominant element in the bodies of ἐπίτροποι⁵⁸ of church property".⁵⁹

In 1879, a year into the British occupation, the Commissioner of Larnaca, Claude Delaval Cobham, prepared a report on the Church of Cyprus and observed on the process of electing the Archbishop: "The leading Christian laymen of Nicosia have often exercised a strong, and in some cases unfavourable influence upon these elections".⁶⁰ In cases where differences had to be settled in terms of a system of values, that system was religion. In fact the ideological allegiance of the Old with the Ottoman regime had made it easier for the Young to challenge their supremacy. On October 14, 1874 the Christian faith was grossly insulted by the Kadı (Judge of Islamic canon law) and his four member Court of Appeal. Two of these members were leading representatives of the Old, a blunder fully exploited by their antagonists in the competition for influence within their community.⁶¹

58. * Trustees.

59. Costas Kyrris, "The Communal Character of the Administration of Church Property in Cyprus under Ottoman Rule", Balkan Studies, Volume 12, No. 2, 1971, p. 34.

60. SA1:1879/Box 7, C. D. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to W. H. Holbech, Acting Chief Secretary, May 19, 1879.

61. For this incident see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "I palia Lefkosia - I moderna protevousa" (Old Nicosia - The modern capital), February 9, 1936.

The clergy feared not only nationalist insurrection but also nationalism as such, and tried to quench the development of secular patriotic sentiments amongst the Greek population. Following the attitude of the Patriarchate of Constantinople the Church of Cyprus had no contact with the Church of Greece, which was from 1833 governed according to Erastian principles.⁶² It was only after the Patriarchate had, in 1850, recognised the new status of the Church of Greece that the Archbishop of Cyprus had, on September 18, despatched the first message of goodwill to his counterpart in Athens.⁶³ Similarly Bishop Kyprianos Economides, subsequently to be acclaimed as the leading figure of Greek nationalism, had during his tenure in the diocese of Kitium maintained a thoroughly correct attitude toward the Ottomans. On October 13, 1874, the Bishop addressed the island's Governor, asking for a respite in the payments of taxes due by the religious establishments and at the same time impressed upon him the loyalty of the senior clergy:

Neither the predecessors in my post, nor your humble servant, nor my Christian folk have ever until now opposed your High and worshipped orders. In the same manner now and in the future, no idea will even occur to us, of disobeying you, God forbid!⁶⁴

62. On the hostility of the Patriarchate toward the actions of the Synod of the Church of Greece see Philip Sherrard, "Church, State and the Greek War of Independence", Richard Clogg ed., The Struggle for Greek Independence, London, 1973, p. 184.

63. See the exchange of letters in Loizos Philippou, I Ekklisia Kyprou epi Tourkokratias (The Church of Cyprus under Turkish Rule), Nicosia, 1975, pp. 153-154.

64. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File VI [ΣΤ'], Item 158, Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium, to the Pasa of Cyprus, October 13, 1874.

Archbishop Sophronios, 1865-1900, who had headed the Church of Cyprus during the last 13 years of Ottoman rule, is a typical example of the senior clergy's attitude toward both the Ottomans and the British. The Archbishop was very much a part of the Millet Bası tradition, apparently oblivious to the impact of the Great Idea during the second half of the century. In an autobiographical note, published by Theodore Papadopoulos, the Prelate began thus: "My fatherland is Cyprus, and my parents are Orthodox Christians of the Eastern dogma". Reference to any Hellenic ideals is markedly absent from the text, even when the author gave an account of his eight years of study in Athens.⁶⁵

V. The Address to the First British High Commissioner

The clergy's attitude toward the political change of July 1878 was reflected in their manner of welcome of the first British High Commissioner, Sir Garnet Wolseley. The degree in which the addresses to Wolseley have been misconstrued is typical of the extent in which the narrative of the island's history has suffered in the hands of what may be described as mainstream Greek historiography. According to certain texts a Greek Prelate had thus welcomed the first British High Commissioner: "We accept the change of Government inasmuch as we trust that Great Britain will help Cyprus, as it did the Ionian Islands, to be united with

65. The note, which has no title, is attached to T. Papadopoulos, "Ethnarkhikos rolos tis Orthodoxou ierarkhias" (The ethnarchic role of the Orthodox Prelates), Kypriakai Spoudai, Vol. XXXV [AE'], 1971, pp. 115-122.

Mother Greece, with which it is nationally connected". This address is first referred to in 1903, and ascribed to Archbishop Sophronios, in a memorial of the Greek members of the Legislative Council to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.⁶⁶ At the time the purpose of citing it in the memorial had been to point out that the British had in 1878 been accepted by the Greeks of Cyprus through some sort of contract, which would only be binding so long as it led to enosis.

In subsequent years the address was not only taken for granted as a historical fact but was also given an additional interpretation, in keeping with efforts to ward off challenges to the Church's predominance within Greek society and the Greek national movement in Cyprus. Its delivery by a senior clergyman, at the moment of transition between Ottoman and British rule, meant that the Church was the sole legitimate bearer of the long tradition for national liberation, to the end of alien rule and even the years of independence. This approach is explicit in the work of Andreas Gavrielides, Ta ethnarkhika dikaiomata kai to enotikon dimopsifisma (The rights of the ethnarchy and the referendum for enosis), Nicosia, 1950 [1972]. Coming out in 1950, a time of bit-

66. SA1:551/1903, "A Memorial from the Greek Population of Cyprus to the Right Honourable Mr. J. Chamberlain, His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies", signed by Kyrillos, Bishop of Kitium, and the Greek members of the Legislative Council, Nicosia, 1903, p. 15.

ter divisions amongst Greeks, the main argument of the book hinges heavily on this nationalist address, which is ascribed to Archbishop Sophronios.⁶⁷ Theodore Papadopoulos notes that the address of Sophronios formed "the foundation stone [ακρογωνιαίος λίθος] of the edifice of the Greek Cypriots' national policy throughout the entire period of British rule" and cites evidence that such an address had been recommended to the Archbishop during a council held prior to Wolseley's arrival in Nicosia. Papadopoulos however also concedes that it is not certain whether the passage was eventually included in the address.⁶⁸

This uncertainty has not diminished the resilience of the conviction that the address had actually been delivered, the only point of disagreement hinging on the identity of the Prelate who asked for the repetition of the offer of the Ionian islands to Greece. Archimandrite Sophronios Michaelides, official historian of the See of Kitium (1992), ascribes the address to Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium.⁶⁹ A solution to the apparent problem of the identity has been given by Constandinos Spyridakis (1972), first Minister of Education in the Republic of Cyprus: there were two such addresses, one by Sophronios and another by Kyprianos.⁷⁰

67. See specifically Gavrielides, Ethnarkhika, op. cit., p. 38.

Gavrielides himself participated in the Ethnarchy Council, whose members were nominated by the Archbishop, and which claimed the right to speak on behalf of all Greek Cypriots.

68. Papadopoulos, "Ethnarkhikos", op. cit., p. 109.

69. Sophronios G. Michaelides, Historia tis kata Kition Ekklesias (History of the Church of Kitium), Larnaca, 1992, p. 274.

70. C. Spyridakis, Syntomos historia tis Kyprou (A short history of Cyprus), Nicosia, 1972, p. 148.



Hill took a more cautious view. Having made a fairly comprehensive review of the literature accessible by the time of completion of his last volume (1948), he noted a whole set of different accounts of that event, none of which was in keeping with that subsequently attributed to the Prelates by Greek nationalists.⁷¹

Philios Zannetos (1910), gives a different account of Sophronios' address to Wolseley: it had been delivered in Nicosia and the text, (which is cited in full), was in much more guarded terms.⁷² A careful scrutiny of historical evidence bears him out. On July 22, 1878 the Times correspondent reported that High Commissioner Wolseley had landed in Larnaca and had been welcomed by the Bishop of Larnaca with declarations of loyalty toward "the Great English nation, the most advanced and civilised of the nations of Europe", adding that from their new condition the Cypriots were "full of bright hopes for the future of their island".⁷³ The correspondent, who had seen the text in the Greek original, made no reference to any nationalist aspirations. Wolseley himself, who kept a daily account of events in his personal diary, made only a cursory entry on the day of his landing;⁷⁴ yet

71. Hill, op. cit., pp. 297-298.

72. Zannetos, Historia, Vol. B', op. cit., pp. 46-47.
For the text in question see below.

73. The Times, "Cyprus", August 7, 1878.

74. Anne Cavendish ed., Cyprus 1878 - The Journal of Sir Garnet Wolseley, Nicosia, 1991, p. 9.

it seems hardly possible that a reference by a Greek Prelate, to the prospect of cessation of colonial rule, would be left unmentioned.

Convincing evidence that a nationalist address was never delivered, lies in the obituaries and funeral orations published in the newspapers coming out in Larnaca and Limassol, the towns included in the diocese of Kitium, at the time of the Bishop's death, in November 1886. His alleged political act of July 1878, for which he is better known today, is not even mentioned in texts written eight years into the British occupation.⁷⁵ Neither is any trace of the Bishop's welcoming address in the diocese of Kitium's papers, in the Archive of the Archbishops of Cyprus.⁷⁶ Indeed it is only archival research which can settle this issue definitively: a copy of the Bishop of Kitium's address in Larnaca has been traced in the archive of the Greek Foreign Ministry. It is fully in keeping with the precis transmitted by the Times correspondent and contains no reference to Hellenic aspirations.⁷⁷

75. In Alithia see the obituary of December 30/12, 1886 and the funeral orations by Georghios Malikides and Aristotelis Palaiologos on December 6/18, 1886. In Salpinx see the obituary of December 27/9, 1886 and in Enosis the obituary of December 26/10, 1886.

76. Archimandrite Michaelides also notes that the text of the address has not been traced (Michaelides, Historia, op. cit., p. 274).

77. IAYE: 1878, File 99/2, "Andigraphon", enclosure in N. Vassiliades, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaca, to Alexandros Coumoundouros, Prime Minister, July 24, 1878.

Further archival research reveals a rather different picture, on the way the conduct of the Prelates was viewed by the Greek nationalists of the period. In the archive of the Archbishops the earliest document on the affair is a letter of July 25, 1878, from the Cypriot community in Cairo to Archbishop Sophronios. The authors of the letter, who were informed of a welcoming address delivered by the Archbishop, were anxious at his spirit:

Do not be daunted, Your Beatitude [Μην πτοήσθε Μακαριώτατε]. Turkey, despotic, arbitrary and illegal, has died as far as Cyprus is concerned. You have a civilised power in front of you...Therefore do away for good with the humble and servile spirit [το ταπεινόφρον και δούλιον ήθος]⁷⁸ and recover the grandeur and eminence becoming of you.

The picture becomes clearer in the next letter to the Archbishop, sent ten days later, and after the realisation that the address which they found so unpalatable had in fact been delivered by the Bishop of Kitium. This time, speaking more of their mind, the authors explained:

(We) had been led to utter despair by the address which had been delivered by the Bishop of Kitium and had unjustly and by a misunderstanding been ascribed to yourself and in which the new administration was being welcomed and the supreme governor of the Island was being addressed in a language which was unclear and wanting, and in the name not of the entire Island or of the Fatherland but of the Greek community.

Finally the authors, having read the address of the Archbishop in the newspapers, expressed their satisfaction at the contents.⁷⁹ Sophronios' address, in itself hardly a blueprint for

78. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File XXVI [ΚΕΤ'], Item 7, Demis Georghiades to Sophronios, July 25, 1878.

79. Ibid., Item 8, Demis Georghiades and eight others to Sophronios, August 5, 1878.

enosis nationalism, is kept in the archive of the Archbishops of Cyprus and is practically identical to the text published by Zannetos. The Archbishop welcomed the British hoping for proper administration, liberal institutions and equality before the law for all religions and races. The most politically-loaded clause stated that Cyprus, though lying at the extreme end of the Mediterranean, was valuable to England for many reasons, "and because it is inhabited by a quiet and well behaved people who, without denying their origins, will behave with loyalty to the new government of the land".⁸⁰ The dominant political tradition in the Church, of non-resistance to authority, was also manifest in the Archbishop's reply to the Cypriots of Cairo: From the letter, fading away with time, the following are worthy of note:

(illegible) regarding the nation of our origins, and imperil not only our position but also sacrifice our very lives...You may be right in part but (illegible) we have not up to now experienced something like this; which (illegible) would harm (illegible) our customs and interests. Everything being in doubt...we cannot harm ourselves (illegible) by a thoughtless act. We have a lot to bear in mind, we have to struggle against opposing interests...⁸¹

This line of political practice was in keeping with the Church's stand during the Ottoman period of Cyprus' history, which had come to a close. It was also going to be maintained during colonial rule until the turn of the century.

80. AAK, Vivlion allilographias Makariou kai Sophroniou (Book of correspondence of Makarios and Sophronios), pp. 566-567.

81. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File XXVI [ΚΕΤ'], Item 9, Sophronios to the Committee of the Cypriot Brotherhood in Cairo, August 20, 1878.

CHAPTER 3

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF TOIL UNDER OTTOMAN RULE

I. Smallholders and Labourers in Large Estates

Agriculture in Cyprus, during the last period of Ottoman rule, 1830-1878, was based on the prevalence of the smallholding peasantry. Though land ownership was far from uniform, the island was a sea of land proprietors. Robert Campbell, British Consul of Rhodes, had reported in 1858:

Hired labourers are very rare at Cyprus, each man being occupied in the cultivation of his own plot; land, particularly in the villages being very easily obtained. It is accordingly found necessary to substitute for them black slave labour.⁸²

Very little of this land was privately owned, thus coming under the category of Mülk. Most of it was Mîrî, traditionally belonging to the Sultan. For the peasant, Mîrî signified not ownership but right of occupancy; property on a plot of Mîrî was limited to certain uses of it, mainly the right to the crops, and was not freely disposable by the current owner of the plot, either by sale or bequest. At the same time, though rights of possession were hereditary, powerful neighbours - money-lenders, tax-farmers and government officials - were a constant threat to the system of small landed proprietorship. This insecurity was an additional factor in the dependence of Greek smallholders on

82. Cited in Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Report by Mr. Campbell, British Consul at Rhodes, upon the Island of Cyprus, 1854-1858", p. 58.

their clergy; it was not uncommon for the weaker of cultivators to deposit their leases with the Church, in exchange for being able to farm their land safely during their lifetime. The Church would eventually get possession and be involved in disputes with the heirs, disputes in which the Abbots and Bishops, as a rule, prevailed.⁸³

The Ottoman reforms, announcing the protection of the peasantry against abuses and extortions, had signalled the gradual decay of this land regime. The Tanzimat acknowledged and confirmed a process as had been experienced in Western Europe two centuries earlier, by which more and more of the land and resources of settled regions were becoming private property. The intention was that Mîrî property should become an individual right, without limitations in conditions regarding the owner's function in society, whether he be Aga, Bishop or ordinary Christian. At the same time, the Ottoman reform was a contradictory process. The primary intention of westernizers was to maintain the rural population on their land and protect them from encroachments of powerful rural interests. The conservatives within the bureaucracy however were reluctant to grant full ownership to Mîrî holders. Kemal Karpat notes that title to the land was crucial in the Ottoman state's existence, as a source of

83. For a description of this process in Cyprus during Ottoman rule see Sant Cassia, "Turkocratia", op. cit., pp. 11-13. On the same subject see also Demetris Christodoulou, The Evolution of the Rural Land Use Pattern in Cyprus, London, 1959, p. 72.

revenue and a lever of control over the peasantry. The bureaucracy's institutional interests were inimical to the establishment of a new land system.⁸⁴

Piecemeal reforms, aimed at securing smallholders in their position as users of Mîrî land, were nevertheless promulgated during the 1840s and 1850s. Professor Halil Inalcik refers to an evolution in the rights of possession, which proceeded with an accelerating pace after the Second Rescript, or Hatt-ı hümayun, of 1856. Land legislation in 1858 and 1867 extended rights of inheritance to other members of the family. Tapu documents, which initially testified possession of Mîrî land, were gradually being accepted as the basis of all kinds of rights on land, including those of sale and alienation.⁸⁵ Property to a plot of land was gradually tending to become something over and above mere physical possession or occupancy: a claim, which the peasant could count on being enforced in his favour by the state. As the full claim to possession of property would encompass the right to alienation, the state would become more and more an engine for guaranteeing the full right of the peasant to the use, as well as disposal, of his land. In the province of Cyprus the intention that such a role should be undertaken by the state was manifested

84. Kemal H. Karpat, "The Land Regime, Social Structure, and Modernization in the Ottoman Empire", W. Polk and R. Chambers eds., Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East, Chicago, 1968, p. 77.

85. Halil Inalcik, "Land Problems in Turkish History", The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy, Collected Studies, London, 1978, pp. 226-227.

by the establishment of the Defteri Hâkani, or Department for Sale and Registration of Land, at about the time of the Hatt-ı Hümayun, in 1853.⁸⁶ The Takrir Emlâk, or Office for Registering of Properties on Lands and Buildings, was established by a ferman in 1867.⁸⁷

However, despite institutional reforms, the evolution from common to privately owned land was a fairly slow process. Apart from the half-heartedness of government circles, a major cause for this delay lay in the nature of Iltizam. In July 1878 the Times correspondent reported on the system of allocating the tithe: "The assessment of the property tax is made, not upon individuals, but upon villages and the Muhtars, or headmen of the villages, are responsible for the collection and payment of the tax..."⁸⁸ The state therefore, entering into no direct relation with each holder of a plot, failed in effect to acknowledge his individual obligation on the dues derived from that plot and, by implication, his rights to it. Though maintaining the mass of the peasantry in a state of relative insecurity, this situation was not entirely negative for their long-term interests. Property which was not fully recognised as private was at the same time not easily mortgaged, disposed of and alienated. The nature

86. SA1:1878/Box 1, HQ 1195/1878, Major H. L. Wood, "Report on Defteri Hâkani Department", September 26, 1878.

87. Ibid., HQ 1545/1878, Major H. L. Wood, "Report on Takrir Emlâk", November 21, 1878.

88. The Times, October 29, 1878.

therefore of property relations effectively protected the mass of the peasantry from the effects of usury. During the Ottoman period indebtedness, though endemic in the Cypriot countryside, was hardly as yet an agency of eventual dispossession. The chief factors responsible for social differentiation had been differences which had arisen in the course of time in the quality or quantity of landholding, of instruments of tillage and of draught animals. From the middle of the 19th century heavy taxation and the gradual shift from a natural to a commodity economy had been conducive to the need for ready money by an increasingly larger section of the rural population. As early as 1846 the level of interest rates had been reported at 15-20% and by 1866 had further risen to 25%.⁸⁹ At regular intervals, the poorer villager would resort to the richer as money-lender, signing a promissory note or pledging part of his land in return. Merchants living in towns made more substantial loans. The fusion into the same person of money-lender and merchant, inherent in the exploitative nature of usury, was noted by Falk Warren, Commissioner of Limassol from the outset of the British occupation, in his first report on wine production:

But the price given to the villager or grower and that obtained by the Limassol merchant is particularly unsatisfactory to the former...I may mention that the villager now borrows money from the merchant and is bound to hand him his produce for a price far below its fair legitimate value.⁹⁰

89. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 187 and p. 241.

90. Cyprus. No. 2 (1880) - Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Year 1879, Falk Warren, Commissioner of Limassol, July 29, 1879. "Annual Report of Limassol District after the

Relations of dependence gradually hardened into networks, which would be the only outlets through which the debtor would be able to market his produce. The grain trade in Famagusta was carried out in similar circumstances. In the first report after the occupation the District Commissioner of Famagusta noted the custom of merchants to

speculate in corn, and sell or rather lend to the peasants, stipulating for repayment in August at an immense profit...The peasant will have his bill renewed with more interest, and thus commences a running account, which hampers the man for years, perhaps for life.⁹¹

Credit however, involved issues of conflicting principles. In the relatively undeveloped market economy of the Ottoman empire inability to meet one's debts fully was still regarded as moral failing. The outcome of this combination of norms and laws was that imprisonment for debt was accepted as condign punishment for this immorality. By the closing years of Ottoman rule rural indebtedness had become so widespread that the British found upon their arrival the island's prisons full of indebted poor.⁹² At the same time the British noted the very vexatious recovery of debt, which allowed debtors to choose imprisonment instead of

First Year of British Administration", (London, 1880), p. 34.

91. Ibid., James Inglis, Commissioner, "Report on the District of Famagusta for Year ending 31st December, 1879", pp. 89-90.

92. For this phenomenon see ibid:

- a) High Commissioner's Report, p. 19;
- b) Famagusta Commissioner's Report, p. 96;
- c) Paphos Commissioner's Report, p. 169;
- d) Kyrenia Commissioner's Report, p. 221.

paying up their debts, even if they had property to dispose of. Hamilton Lang, British Consul at Larnaca at the time of the occupation, noted that questions of property and mortgage would present the greatest difficulty to the new administrators and that the ineffectuality of mortgage upon land had been asserted by Europeans long resident in Turkey.⁹³ In the British metropolis imprisonment for debt had already been abolished in 1869, simultaneously with further reforms in bankruptcy law. Writing on this process Dr. G. R. Rubin has noted the following:

The abolition of imprisonment for debt and the expansion of bankruptcy proceedings were two sides of the same coin, in that the structural principles of bankruptcy law on the one hand and of civil proceedings against the body on the other, stand in contradiction to one another...The former procedure aimed to be economically rational, the latter to be punitive...⁹⁴

Rubin refers to indebtedness amongst labourers and petty merchants, in a country where land was owned by the gentry and cultivated by tenant farmers. In the Ottoman land regime however difficulties in the execution of proceedings against mortgaged property were not solely due to the state's pre-capitalist economic approach. They constituted also a built-in defence of the interests of the smallholding peasantry, which the Ottomans were careful to uphold. A lucid account of this consideration in

93. Hamilton Lang, Cyprus: Its History, its Present Resources and Future Prospects, London, 1878, pp. 275-276.

94. G. R. Rubin, "Law, Poverty and Imprisonment for Debt, 1869-1914", G. R. Rubin & David Sugarman eds., Law, Economy and Society, 1750-1914: Essays in the History of English Law, Oxford, 1984, p. 244.

the province of Cyprus was given eight years into the British occupation by the Commissioner of Paphos, the district where land registration was near chaotic:

The whole spirit of Turkish Law is, I take it, in favour of debtors. The ser'û law certainly is, and even the modern innovations have not been able to do away with that spirit, and under the old procedure the number of delays and formalities (illegible) had to be gone through before a creditor could get (illegible) execution of his debtor's property, deterred many from applying for such execution or if they did so there was ample time during the process for the parties to come to an arrangement and so the matter dragged on, the debtor bringing instalment when he was able.

From the point of view of our western civilisation this no doubt would appear an unsatisfactory state of affairs but when it is considered that in a country like Cyprus about 90 per cent of the population get into debt more or less every winter, and these are the peasant proprietors who are the backbone of the country and provide the greatest proportion of the Revenue, it will be seen that there is some reason for Government protecting them as much as possible. To this policy I also attribute the very small amount of absolute destitution which is to be met with in Cyprus.⁹⁵

Though inequality of landownership was not as pronounced as in other regions of the Empire the large estates, or ciftliks, which were typical of the Ottoman realm, also dotted the map of the island province. In 1863, the British Consul in Larnaca, Horace White, noted that in Cyprus, due to the absence of statistics, it was difficult to fix the proportion borne to each other by farms of different extent. The Consul estimated however, that there were about 70 large estates of from 700 to 7,000 acres.⁹⁶

95. SA1:1696/1886, Harry Thompson, Commissioner of Paphos, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, May 18, 1886.

96. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Replies to Queries upon Agriculture Addressed to Consuls by Sir H. L. Bulwer, 1863", p. 297.

These estates produced mainly for export and could be broadly divided into two main types. The earlier type were Vâkuf, trusts for pious endowments, which were formed by influential figures obtaining grants to Mîrî lands. Halil Inalcik notes that the change in the legal status of the çiftlik did not alter the organization of production and the newcomers simply went on collecting from the reayas the dues from the land.⁹⁷ According to Archimandrite Kyprianos, writing in 1788, the revenues from Famagusta and the Carpas were dedicated to Medine Mosque in Constantinople:

And in the same way the so-called çiftliks of Morphou, Polis Chrysochou and Kouklia, and their subject villages, fourteen belonging to Kouklia, seven to Polis and, in the case of Morphou, the inhabitants of the village alone.⁹⁸

Though the cultivator was left in place the rate of exploitation of the peasants, became more intense. This resulted from the fact that the establishment of Vâkuf endowments was quite often a covert form of turning these lands into the private property of the trustees of the Evkaf, the office administering Vâkuf property. The Annex to the Convention which transferred Cyprus to British rule provided that Evkaf affairs should be administered jointly by a Turkish and a British delegate. The first investiga-

97. Halil Inalcik, "The Emergence of Big Farms, Çiftliks: State, Landlords and Tenants", Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History, London, 1985, pp. 107-108.

98. Archimandrite Kyprianos, Historia khronologiki tis nisou Kyprou (Chronological history of the island of Cyprus), Venice, 1788, (Nicosia, 1902), pp. 450-451.

tion, conducted by the British delegate, M. B. Seager, revealed a situation of corruption and confusion. The High Commissioner, Sir Robert Biddulph, reported to the Colonial Office that for many years prior to the occupation, trustees rarely presented their accounts and when they failed to do so were never called to account for it. Upon inspection by the British delegate, the trustees were in many cases found to have appropriated the whole of the revenues to their own use. The Evkaf register had no complete record of Vâkıf properties and many unrecorded ones were discovered in the process of investigation.⁹⁹

The second type of ciftliks were established by powerful notables on land which was waste or uninhabited, though the usurpation of land belonging to Christian reayas was not uncommon. The formation of these plantation-like ciftliks, which produced mainly for export, involved a measure of re-organisation in the process of production. Share-cropping was the most common mode of cultivation, where the landlords as a rule, provided all inputs (land, seed, implements) other than labour. Generally landowners could not easily use the labour of reayas; they were already registered in the state survey books for taxation in a defined area and their labour was subject to the restrictions which would have to be observed, and which ensured a minimum share for the reaya cultivator. Servile labour, whose share of the crop was considerably lower, was generally preferable, though by the time

99. Reports on the Evkaf Properties, Cyprus, compiled by M. B. Seager, London, 1883, pp. 3-4.

of the Tanzimat reforms unfree forms of labour were formally abolished in the Empire. Servile agriculturalists tended over time to be identified with the rest of the reayas and disappear.¹⁰⁰

Such çiftliks continued to be served by share-cropping families, who were unable to cultivate marginal lands on their own and attached themselves to the estates of the wealthy. These were living-in labourers, known as mistarkoi.¹⁰¹ They were the poorest of the rural labour force, who heralded the formative stages of the capitalist mode of production in Cypriot agriculture. Unlike seasonal labourers the mistarkoi succumbed to the landowner on a long-term basis, sometimes for several years. Their meagre income, apart from a small share of the crop, consisted of food, accommodation and clothing. In a folktale from the village of Akhna, a child is offered to work as mistarko in exchange for a loaf of bread.¹⁰² The numbers of poor labouring in these circumstances are not easy to estimate since no cadastral survey was completed in Cyprus by the Ottomans. During the early

100. Halil Inalcik, "Servile Labor in the Ottoman Empire", Abraham Ascher, Tibor Halasi-Kun, Béla K. Király eds., The Mutual Effects of the Islamic and Judeo Christian Worlds: The East European Pattern, New York, 1979, pp. 34, 41, 42.

101. For a brief description of the term see Kyriacos Hadjioannou, Ta en diaspora (Essays of the diaspora), Volume A', Nicosia, 1969, p. 40.

102. Kyriacos Hadjioannou ed., I Akhna, Nicosia, 1994, p. 92.

years of British rule the mistarkoi received money payments, which were still quite low, were given every six months or even a year, and were supplemented by perquisites.¹⁰³ Their conditions of employment meant constant supervision by their masters, unlimited hours of tending to agricultural and pastoral tasks and no opportunity for acquaintance with worldly matters. Their payments in perquisites meant that they were always careful to ingratiate themselves with their employers and that their isolation was accentuated by shortage of cash; traditionally, these were the people who could never afford to enter the village coffee shop. The status, therefore, of mistarkoi was understandably quite low; the term as such carried a proverbially humble connotation, like the Russian muzhik. In the 27th verse of the poem of Vasilis Michaelides, I Ennati Iouliou, the Pasa yells at a man who, though threatened with death, still refuses to confess his guilt:

Why do you lie and sneer at us,
do you take us for your mistarkoi?¹⁰⁴

Apart from the mistarkoi, earning their livelihood in çiftliks, large numbers of rural poor lived and laboured under the influence of the senior clergy. Churches and monasteries enjoyed a privileged legal status, comparable to that of the Vâkıf. Berats from Constantinople not only protected the clergy's

103. For an account of agricultural income paid per annum see The Cyprus Blue Book, 1892-1893, Nicosia, 1894, p. 379.

104. Vasilis Michaelides, "I Ennati Iouliou tou 1821" (The Ninth of July of 1821), Apanda, Nicosia, 1987, p. 124.

property but also enabled them to extend it. In 1897, 19 years into the British occupation, an official commission appointed to inquire into church property, came to startling conclusions. Out of a total of 241,979 donums of land claimed by the Church 133,453 donums (55%), which were described as uncultivated, had no title and were also not registered in the Land Registry Department, either in Nicosia or in Constantinople.¹⁰⁵ During Ottoman rule the prelates could afford to find their recognisances, because these claims were propped up by the Ottoman state. L. Philippou refers to an unpublished document from the Porte, in 1863

which instructed the authorities not to disturb the churches and monasteries on lands held without title deed [δὲτα τὰ ἀνευ τίτλου κτήματά των]. The Church was thus left free to administer these lands without any inconvenience [ἀνενοχλήτως] and without having to have title deeds for them.¹⁰⁶

Abbots in particular were able to lay claim to vast tracts of uncultivated land, including forests and valleys, as having ab antiquo been monastic property. Being the island's major landowner the Church entered into contractual arrangements with thousands of share-croppers. Access to uncultivated lands, conditional upon the clergy's permission, was also crucial for numerous rural households, for pasturing their animals and getting timber and firewood.

105. SA1:2439/1897, "Report of Ecclesiastical Property Commission", September 21, 1897, p. 5.

106. Philippou, Ekklesia, op. cit., p. 31.

Apart from those poor whose lives were thus influenced, in a general sense, by the Prelates, a section of the population lived and laboured in circumstances of direct dependence. Episcopal control was most obviously exercised on those who joined the clergy. The numbers of priests were considerable, given that the Church's economic capacity and political influence could afford them a life that was preferable to what they would expect as lay members of the community. In 1750 Alexander Drummond, British Consul at Aleppo, following a visit to Cyprus, observed of the position of the Greek clergy:

The poor priests subsist almost entirely upon the charity of the parishes, to which they belong; this even in Larnaca, never amounts to more than forty or fifty piastres, so that they are obliged to follow the meanest occupations for bread; yet great numbers are brought up at the altar that they may be exempted from the weight of Turkish taxes, which as laymen they would not be able to bear.¹⁰⁷

Samuel Baker, who toured the island at the time of the occupation, observed that it was possible for a man to become a priest provided he were recommended by the inhabitants of the village and paid the Bishop a fee of 100-150 piastres. The man was then ordained and at once at liberty to enter his duties:

These ordination fees are a temptation to the Bishops to increase the number of priests to an unlimited extent, and the result is seen throughout Cyprus in a large and superfluous body of the most ignorant people, totally unfitted for their position.¹⁰⁸

107. Cited in John Hackett, A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, London, 1901, p. 268.

108. Sir Samuel Baker, Cyprus as I Saw it in 1879, London, 1879, p. 414.

Monastic life was even more popular with the poor, because monks, unlike priests, were not dependent on their parishioners but lived off the extensive properties of their monasteries. Hackett pointed out that the inequality between the relative prosperity of the senior and monastic clergy and the abject poverty of the parish clergy was rather remarkable.¹⁰⁹ As members of the brotherhood, monks had their own plots of land, flocks of sheep and stores of supplies; some of them would bequeath considerable fortunes to their relatives. They were also reported to be providing refuge to poor and/or widowed women in their residences.¹¹⁰ Apart from his own cell a monk also kept a smaller one, for the young postulant [δόκιμος] attached to him. The youth, much like an apprentice, would upon admission engage upon supervised tasks in the fields and premises of the monastery. He would also receive the rudiments of education and eventually become a monk himself and hope to rise to higher posts in the clerical hierarchy.¹¹¹

A distinct form of servile poor, serving in monasteries, were the votaries [τοπévoι]. They had as a rule, having suffered from serious illness, taken vows to the saint of a monastery. Upon recovery they would go and stay in the monastery, labouring in repayment of their vow. A youth for whom vows had been taken by

109. Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 268.

110. SA1:1879/Box 7, B. Seager, Assistant Commissioner of Nicosia, to George Greaves, Chief Secretary, April 16, 1879.

111. Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 267.

his family would be taken to the monastery by the father, who would then declare in public that he had a child for sale. This act of symbolism rendered the youth kinless; within the prevalent system of patriarchal authority it was tantamount to leaving him with no rights at all. The custom was called sklavoma, literally enslavement. A metal ring [κουλούρι] would be placed around the youth's neck, as a sign of bondage lasting for the duration of the vow and until his release, upon the payment of a sum to the monastery.¹¹² According to a description of Kykko monastery in 1751, the healing powers of the Madonna were witnessed by the diseased who became her slaves [οι εν ασθενεία γερόμενοι σκλάβοι της Θεοτόκου]. The most telling example was a youth from Kastoria, Macedonia, who had been healed from mania after having worn the customary ring [περιέθετο ως δούλος κατά το συνήθες τω τραχήλω το κολλάριον].¹¹³ In certain cases, this bondage would last a lifetime. Fifteen such unfree labourers had in 1813 been donated by Archbishop Kyprianos to the monastery of Makhairas, which had been faltering financially. The entry in the Code of the Archbishopric reads as follows:

We have decided to stretch a helping hand and to donate...another fifteen slaves [δούλους], as a trivial and humble offering on our behalf to the most Most Pure Lady, so that our "Madonna of Makhairas" will have a minimum total of five and seventy permanently desig-

112. For a description of this custom in Cyprus see Sakellarios, Vol. A', op. cit., p. 703.

113. Ephraim Athenaios, Perigraphi tis sevasmias kai vasilikis monis tou Kykkou (A description of the revered and regal monastery of Kykko), Venice, 1751, p. 55.

nated slaves [ρητοί δούλοι παντοτεινοί], who would thereafter suffice for the basic needs of the Brothers.¹¹⁴

Destitute poor, prepared to labour in return for board and lodging, also converged on the monasteries. Such poor were also, though in smaller numbers, attached to parish churches; according to a list of the archdiocese, for the year 1826, most churches in Nicosia had one such labourer though wealthy churches, such as Trypiotis, had three and the cathedral of Ayios Joannis was served by ten.¹¹⁵ Servants of parish churches, along with monastery postulants, were primarily engaged as "beggars" [ζητιάνοι], collecting zeteiai and canonica from the populace. Clerical and monastic establishments were therefore, amongst other things, centres where labour was concentrated in large numbers and set to work in conditions which were distinctly pre-capitalist, under the constant supervision and ideological domination of the clergy. Such labour relations, which were concomitant upon the influence of the Church, were still in force at the time of the British occupation. The first High Commissioner, Sir Garnet Wolseley, who was impressed by the wealth of Kykko monastery, noted in his diary on November 28, 1878: "There are

114. Cited in Simos Menardos, I en Kypro iera moni tis Panayias tou Makhaira (The holy monastery of the Madonna of Makhairas in Cyprus), Pireus, 1929, p. 150.

115. Theodore Papadopoulos, Social and Historical Data on Population, Nicosia, 1965, p. 184. Papadopoulos uses the sanitized translation "Numbers of servants in the diocese" for the original entry: [Οι δούλοι Αρχιεπισκοπής].

only about twenty six or thirty monks belonging to the foundation but they have some 200 people, lay-brothers and work people always about the convent".¹¹⁶

Though by 1878 laymen living in monasteries were probably in a less subordinate position than their counterparts of earlier times, there was no question of them behaving in a way which would be at odds with the political views of their Abbot. Sir Samuel Baker, a traveller in Cyprus, having in 1879 spent a few days in the monastery of Ayios Neophytos in Paphos, noted on the submissive attitude of these poor:

My own servants were excellent, and never quarrelled or complained; they appeared to have been mesmerised by the placid character of their position, and to have become angelic; especially if not fatiguing themselves through over-exertion.¹¹⁷

Finally there was another class of poor, who were totally dependant on the clergy for a living. They were mostly centred in Nicosia where they were fed at the archbishopric. Being unfit or unwilling to work they formed a sort of lazaroni and were in return put into all kinds of uses in serving the archbishopric's interests. The Consul of Greece reported on these dependants in 1872:

The archbishopric feeds approximately sixty persons. In theory they are used for the internal and external service of the establishment though in fact they do nothing of the sort. Their number is excessively large; yet, they are regarded as the sine qua non for the Archbishop's demands, vaingloriousness, trifling issues, self-seeking obligations and petty ambitions.

116. Cavendish, Wolseley, op. cit., p. 138.

117. Baker, Cyprus, op. cit., p. 415.

Owing to feeding the above the archbishopric is regarded by many as a rectorship which has to feed every retired churchman, every idler and lazy...¹¹⁸

II. Tradesmen and Labourers in Towns

In the towns of Cyprus trading and manufacturing activity was controlled by the esnafs (syntekhniai in Greek), guildlike structures which supervised the quality of products and advised the authorities on setting the prices of commodities. The most important function of the esnafs was regulating entry into the trade. A çirağ (unskilled apprentice) would as a rule be engaged at a tender age in the shop of a master. Upon reaching adolescence, he would be upgraded to the status of kalfas (qualified workman) and, after a period in this grade, he could apply for the council of masters' permission to become a master craftsman and set up his own shop. Corporate trades also encompassed occupations engaging in small-scale retail commerce, such as grocers and sellers in spirits. They were grouped along with manufacturing trades into a common sector of society, occupying an intermediate place in the urban social hierarchy. Occupations as diverse as humble shoemakers and wealthy merchants were bracketed together in one list as tradesmen. Their unity as a category lay in the fact that traders who engaged in manufacturing also engaged in

118. IAYE: 1872, File 58/3, Peristianis to Voulgaris, op. cit.

commerce. Master shoemakers not only made shoes but sold them as well, in the same way that a master carpenter was not only a builder but also a contractor.

Given the Turks' traditional preference for the land and their monopoly of the administrative apparatus, the great majority of people working with their hands in some productive capacity were Greeks, particularly in those occupations which required strenuous physical activity. Amongst the Turks old suspicions about too direct involvement in trade lingered on; both commercial and manufacturing occupations could be classed together as a form of manual labour, base and appropriate to the infidel Millets.¹¹⁹ In rural areas and in isolated districts such as Paphos, Greeks made up the entire skilled labour force. In 1858 Robert Campbell, British Consul in Rhodes, reported on Cyprus:

In speaking of artizans, it is to be remarked that the Greeks alone exercise the trades of mason, joiner, blacksmith, tailor, &c., the Turks reserving to themselves lace-making, and other employments of secondary importance.¹²⁰

Though, for every day issues, social identifications pertaining to the plebs were not unimportant, in the framework of the Millet system they were rendered rather subordinate. Of the

119. On this point see Halil Inalcik, "The Ottoman Economic Mind and Aspects of the Ottoman Economy", Ottoman Empire, op. cit., pp. 217-218.

120. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Translation of a Consular Report Forwarded by Mr. Campbell, British Consul at Rhodes, upon the Island of Cyprus, for the Years 1854-8", p. 58.

Turks, those who had to labour with their hands, were anxious to preserve the Millet system, which kept them from sliding to the bottom of the social scale. On April 7, 1853, Karl Marx, poet of labour unity across ethnic lines, wrote in the New York Daily Tribune on the peculiarities of social contradictions in the Ottoman Empire:

We can hardly describe the Turks as the ruling class of Turkey because the relations of the different classes of society there are as much mixed up as those of the various races. The Turk is according to localities and circumstances, workman, farmer, small freeholder, trader, feudal landlord in the lowest and most barbaric stage of feudalism, civil officer, or soldier; but in all these different social positions he belongs to the privileged creed and nation - he alone has the right to carry arms, and the highest Christian has to give up the footpath to the lowest Moslem he meets...

The principal power of the Turkish population in Europe, independently of the reserve always ready to be drawn from Asia, lies in the mob of Constantinople and a few other large towns. It is essentially Turkish, and though it finds its principal livelihood by doing jobs for Christian capitalists, it maintains with great jealousy the imaginary superiority and real impunity for excesses which the privileges of Islam confer upon it as compared with Christians.¹²¹

The rising influence of the Greeks and other subject populations in the Empire, rendered the Turkish lower strata unable to manifest their entity outside the precepts of the Ulema. This body of scribes, jurists and religious men, which maintained close relations with the Muslim merchants and craftsmen, had, as Professor Sami Zubaida has observed, no institutional basis of power other than that secured for them by state patronage. Unlike

121. Cited in Karl Marx - Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Volume 12, London, 1879, p. 8.

the Christian clergy, the Ulema had no organisation which could provide a basis for independent political action; on the contrary, the leaders of the Ulema stressed to the Turkish poor the importance of living under a Muslim government.¹²² It was therefore natural that in Cyprus, as in the rest of the Empire, the proclamation, in April 1856, of the liberalizing reforms of the Khatt-ı hümayun was met with open hostility by the Turkish labouring poor. Hill, quoting the French Consul's report, noted that the Governor was under the thumb of the Kadı and that the Ulema

averred that if the reforms took effect, it would only remain for all the faithful to take up arms for the maintenance of the Sacred Law based on the Koran. The Greeks, realizing the danger of such a violent Moslem reaction, were moderate in their enthusiasm.¹²³

This ideology of the Turkish labouring poor was a serious obstacle toward any co-operation with their counterparts in the Christian Millet. Defiance to state authority was therefore no less tolerable to Nicosia's Turkish elite than it was to Turkish guildsmen. Loyalty was most intense amongst the tanners and butchers of Nicosia, comprising the only two trades which, though manual, were dominated by Turks. In tanning, especially, the Turks enjoyed a monopoly, implemented by the force of law, from the time of the Ottoman conquest.¹²⁴ The explanation of these two

122. Sami Zubaida, "Economic and Political Activism in Islam", Economy and Society, 1972, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 328-329.

123. Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

124. In 1818, when the influence of the Greek elite had been at its apogee, the Kapudane Paşa had to intervene with the

rule confirming exceptions lies probably in the fact that familiarity with blood and possession and skill in handling sharp instruments were best left to members of the ruling Millet. On June 9, 1873, these two guilds readily aided the police in drowning in blood a prisoners' attempt to escape from Nicosia gaol. Hill referred to the force accompanying the Pasa as "the dregs of the Turkish element, whose appetite for any disturbance and thirst for blood were insatiable,...this rabble of butchers, tanners and zaptiyes".¹²⁵

The interests of the major Greek tradesmen were, until the dawn of the 19th century, expressed through the institution of the Dragoman (Interpreter), the leading secular post allocated to the Greek community. Dragoman Marcoullis had, as a sarraf, traded in money, and had a sound bazaar background.¹²⁶ Following his fall from favour and imprisonment in Constantinople, Cypriot traders [πραγματευτάδες] spared no efforts and money in order to secure his release.¹²⁷ Dragoman Miserghiorgis was a wealthy

island's Governor and Chief Kadı in order to stop reaya encroachments into the trade (SA1:1879/Box 6, Hassan Pasa, Minister of Marine, to Governor Ahmet Rashid Effendi & to the Judge of Nicosia, 1234/1818).

125. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 257.

126. Mitropolititis Kitiou Nicodemos, "Agnostai selidai Tourkikis tyrannias en Kypro" (Unknown pages of Turkish tyranny in Cyprus), Kypriaka Khronika, 1924, p. 142.

127. Joannis Theocharides, "Yia ton thesmo tis Dragomanias stin Kypro epi Tourkokratias" (On the Dragoman institution in Cyprus during Turkish Rule), Praktika Kypriologikou, 1987, op. cit., pp. 65-75.

trader himself.¹²⁸ Finally, the most celebrated of Dragomans, Hadjigeorgakis Cornesios, 1779-1809, had been the son of a nouveau riche calicoe printer.¹²⁹ By the time of Hadjigeorgakis' execution major traders and master craftsmen constituted an acknowledged section of the Greek notables. In 1811 the mahallecis (leaders of quarters) in the Greek sector of Nicosia were four master craftsmen,¹³⁰ a natural development, given that the bazaar engulfed the northern half of the capital. As in the rest of the Ottoman Empire, Christian tradesmen were becoming increasingly associated with their Church.¹³¹ Greek influence in trade and manufacture was reflected in the fact that Kykko, the major monastery in the island and Phaneromeni, the wealthiest parish church in Nicosia, each owned an entire street in the bazaar.¹³²

128. Andonis Indianos, "Peri tou thesmou tis Dragomanias en Kypro" (On the Dragoman institution in Cyprus), Kypriakai Spoudai, Volume II [B'], 1938, p. 152.

129. For Hadjigeorgakis' family origins see Constantinos Myrianthopoulos, Hadjigeorgakis Cornesios, O Dragomanos tis Kyprou 1779-1809 (The Dragoman of Cyprus), Nicosia, 1934, p. 79.

130. Costas Kyrris, "Dedomena epi ton koinonikon thesmon tis Kyprou" (Facts on the social institutions of Cyprus), Epetiris Kentrou Epistimonikon Erevnon (Annual Review of the Cyprus Research Centre), Volume VI, Nicosia, 1973, p. 335.

131. See the relationship between Bulgarian esnafs and church officials in R. J. Crampton, "Bulgarian Society in the Early 19th Century", R. Clogg ed., Balkan Society, op. cit., p. 187.

132. See in Neos Kypriakos Phylax:

a) "To pazarin tou Kykkou" (The bazaar of Kykko), April 18, 1936;

b) "O dromos Phaneromenis" (The street of Phaneromeni), April 23, 1936;

c) "Paliomaghaza kai palioparanges" (Old shops and old huts), April 24, 1936.

With the inauguration of the Tanzimat reforms, esnaf interests in local administration were manifested through the newly formed Meclis Idare. As in the days of the Dragomans, the influential Greeks who participated in the administrative system did so by acknowledging the status quo. Hence the esnafs had no political tradition other than the maintenance of Ottoman domination over those who were socially and nationally subservient. Writing in 1856 the French Consul, Paul Darras, noted that the Meclis Idare of Nicosia had been staffed with men of the syn-tekhnia of the shopkeepers, the shoemakers, the tanners, e.t.c., who could have no ideas "other than nodding to the opinion of the Pasa, the Müfti*¹³³ or the Kadı".¹³⁴ In such circumstances the nationality of the usta (chief master) of a trade did not seem to matter. The major Greek ustas, like their tax-farming coreligionists, reinforced their mutual economic interests with the Turkish administrative elite by everyday social intercourse. Relations between Governor Said Pasa and the Greek usta of the shoemakers, Hadgigavrilis, were so openly cordial as to arouse resentment amongst the capital's Turkish notables.¹³⁵

The support of Greek ustas toward the esnaf system was natural, given that these corporate structures were conducive to the maintenance of the existing stratification within Greek

133. * Official expounder of Muhammedan law.

134. Cited in Kyriazis, Kypriaka Khronika, 1929, op. cit, p. 244.

135. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "O thriamvos tou Said Pasa" (The triumph of Said Pasa), September 4, 1936.

society in Cyprus. Though craftsmen's occupations were manual or mechanical, they were also arts - that is they required the exercise of discipline and intelligence; these qualities raised them above mere cultivators and unskilled labourers and made them worthy of officially recognised rights. Above them were the religious hierarchy, the bureaucracy, and the merchant tax-farmers, all of whom were legally recognised, privileged and, to different degrees, internally regulated. The associations of tradesmen, even if at the bottom, were still part of a hierarchy of corporately organised groups - a consideration which could prevent craftsmen and shopkeepers from becoming agitators. Another brake to such activities was the particularity of each trade community. In contrast to the most recent idiom, emphasizing similarities between workers employed in different occupations, the esnaf's idiom emphasized their differences. The rights of each esnaf were embodied in gediks, statutes which granted the right to exclusive exercise of a trade in a particular area. Shops belonging to particular trades were only licensed to operate in certain streets, which were known accordingly as Odos Chrysochoon (Goldsmiths' street), Kazandzidon (Coppersmiths'), Tsangaridon (Shoemakers'), e.t.c.¹³⁶ The layout of the town centres functionally conformed with the requirements of the bazaar. During a visit to Cyprus, around 1870, the Austrian

136. Agni Michaelidou, Khora, i palia Lefkosia (Khora, the old town of Nicosia, 1977, p. 20.

Archduke Ludwig Salvatori noted the reflection of trading activity in the street layout of Nicosia and listed a total of 23 bazaars:

1. Manufactures, 2. Tailors, 3. Calico, rugs, hides, 4. European shoemakers, 5. Shoemakers, 6. Turkish shoes, 7. Yarns, 8. Cabinet-makers, 9. Carriages, 10. Copper articles, 11. Silversmiths, 12. Ironware, 13. Earthenware, 14. Haberdashery, 15. Taverns, 16. Vegetables and meat, 17. Fish, 18. Halava (sweets), 19. Women, 20. Cotton, 21. Flour, 22. Wheat and barley, 23. Mules.¹³⁷

Certain trades, such as masonry, could not by their nature be confined to set premises. In such cases, topographical isolation was accentuated by their traditional concentration in certain communities. Kaimakli, the village suburb of Nicosia, was the largest such community since the 16th century, when the Venetians had utilised local labour for the erection of the walls surrounding the capital.¹³⁸ The adjacent village of Pallouriotissa was also known for its carpentry tradition.¹³⁹

Each trade had its own distinct qualities and, within the domain defined by the gedik, each trade community was responsible for assuring the honesty of its members. Work done by masters of

137. Archduke Louis Salvator of Austria, Levkosia the Capital of Cyprus, Prague, 1873 (London, 1983), p. 67.

Bazaar 19, was the Genekopazaron, or Iblik bazaar, where women, on Fridays, marketed their domestically produced goods.

138. For the mason tradition of Kaimakli and Lapithos see Costas Kyrris "Epangelmata, kharakterismoï, kharaktires kai morphai tou laikou, oikonomikou kai koinonikou viou ton Kyprion" (Trades, characterisations, characters and aspects of the folk, economic and social life of Cypriots), Part 5, Kypriakos Logos (Cyprus Discourse), No. 6, November - December 1969, p. 331.

139. Ibid., Part 3, No. 4, July - August 1969, p. 236.

the trade would be inspected by the masters' council whose members, being themselves experienced practitioners in the art, would examine charges of fraud with regard to the quality of materials or the standard of craftsmanship of goods produced. Should such charges be proven, the esnaf's usta would go to the shop in question and overturn the bench on which the craftsman worked. The bench would be left lying on the floor until the period of suspension from work was over.¹⁴⁰

Because art was a matter of rules, it was logical that it could be perfected by long practice and observation of regulations, by gradual ascendancy through a hierarchy and under the surveillance of the masters' council, which governed admission and promotion in the ranks. This tradition was best exemplified in the case of the goldsmiths, who boasted of the superior skill and intelligence of their craft. The kalfas applying to become a master would present his "masterpiece", usually a silver bowl. That was carefully examined by the masters and, provided it was judged as being of adequate craftsmanship, they shouted in unison axios, axios (worthy), whereupon the usta placed a mantle upon the new master's shoulders.¹⁴¹ The masterpiece presentation was part of a greater ritual of initiation, serving to bind the new member closely to the trade. At the meeting of the masters' council, which sanctioned the applicant's right to join the guild, a

140. Michaelidou, Khora, op. cit., p. 156.

141. Ibid., p. 161.

solemn atmosphere was established designed to impress the candidate with the seriousness of the step he was about to take. From time to time the unity of the members was reaffirmed by the ceremonials of periodic meetings, convened by the usta.¹⁴²

Such rituals stressed the artisan's union with his esnaf as well as the esnaf's distinction from other such bodies.¹⁴³ In fact, the organised life of the esnafs was conducive to the confinement of the skilled labour force within the fraternal loyalties, and the vertical consciousness of particular trades. This community of members would be lifelong and cover all aspects of daily activity. The Ottoman guilds' funds served various purposes: lending to those who wished to enlarge their business, offering charity to the sick and even providing decent funerals for poor tradesmen.¹⁴⁴ The central religious activity of the esnaf was devotion to a patron saint; Greek boatmen celebrated the day of Saint Nicholas, patron of seamen, and Greek masons in Kaimakli the day of Santa Barbara, defender of fortifications.¹⁴⁵ Turkish tanners maintained two chapels in Nicosia, devoted to their

142. Ibid., p. 157.

143. For the phenomenon of ceremony in corporate craft unions see Eric J. Hobsbawm, "Ritual in Social Movements", Primitive Rebels, Manchester, 1959, pp. 150-175 and, by the same author, "The Transformation of Labour Rituals", Worlds of Labour, London, 1984, pp. 66-82.

144. Gabriel Baer, "The Administrative, Economic and Social Functions of Turkish Guilds", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, January, 1970, pp. 44-45.

145. Pitsa Protopapa ed., Kaimakli - Symvoli sti laiki tekhnē (Kaimakli - A contribution to folk art), Nicosia, 1987, p. 11.

patron saint Akhirvan Dede.¹⁴⁶

The masters were the core of these trade communities. Kalfas and çirağs were considered as incorporated in the master's family and lacked an independent occupational personality. Ostensibly, being the master's kin, a workman also expected his aid in times of trouble, though being at the same time subject to his goodwill. Young çirağs especially were totally subordinate, had to help the master's wife with housework and were even physically assaulted if they incurred their master's displeasure. When, after having been introduced to the most elaborate aspects of the craft, the lad became a kalfas, he received a modest wage, was treated more humanely and might even be assigned a seat at his employer's dining table. The fact that journeymen, and especially apprentices, were considered as members of the family had definite political implications. Fathers of families were regarded as representing, vis-à-vis the state, their wives, children, apprentices, journeymen and servants, over whom they had complete authority. In a truly paternalistic style of politics, the household was part of the Ottoman administrative structure. In referring to the fact that Islam had, by tradition, no conception of municipal liberties, Robert Lewis has pointed out that Ottoman towns lacked corporate autonomy and legal exis-

146. See the brief history and description of the tanning trade in SA1:864/1940, Munir Bey, Chief Delegate of Evkaf, to Andrew Wright, Colonial Secretary, June 27, 1940.

tence to the extent that "there was no city but only a conglomeration of families, quarters and guilds, each with their own chiefs or leaders..."¹⁴⁷

Even petty traders, self-employed and mobile, were subject to domination and paternalism. Owing to the very poor state of communications, the only form of capital was the money capital accumulated by merchants and usurers. The typical capitalist was a merchant who drew his profit from the monopoly of the carrying of trade between Cyprus and geographically remote areas. Importing articles of small bulk and high prices, these merchants were, next to the master craftsmen, a dominant force in the bazaar. According to Constantinides, as late as the eve of the occupation, large bundles of commodities were being brought and laid out in the market place. Pedlars would rush forward and literally plead to be given a share of the merchandise.¹⁴⁸

III. The Decline of the Corporate Economy

Unlike Iltizam, or the charters upholding the clergy's privileges, both of which were only abolished with the occupation, the esnaf system had been in decline on an empire-wide

147. Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London, 1969, p. 393.

148. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Taxidia palion emboron me ta kemerga gemata lires" (Journeys of merchants in old times, with their money-belts full of money), March 28, 1936.

scale for nearly 40 years. The 1838 commercial convention with Britain presaged the decline of Ottoman handicrafts, as machine-made goods began pouring in from Europe.¹⁴⁹ Though the system was never formally abolished, the Porte effectively acknowledged that it was gradually disappearing. By special Irade (Decree), in May 1860, no more gediks would be issued by the Government and the Evkaf and any licenses which became vacant would no longer be sold to new owners.¹⁵⁰ In Cyprus, support from the authorities toward the corporate, and readily taxable organisation of gainful activity seems to have been more durable. In 1869 the Consul of Greece, George Menardos, noted that the administration allowed the preservation of those esnafs which happened to exist, on condition that they paid the dues demanded from them. The levying of these dues was also encouraged by the Consuls of France and Britain. Aiming to uphold the privileges of Cypriots who acquired their protection, and were thus exempted from such taxes, these consulates supported the payment of taxes by the esnafs

being indifferent to find out...whether esnafs exist in Turkey, whether they have leadership, regulations, standards, treasury and, above all, whether these taxes are to be collected by the Government or by the leadership of the esnafs, for their own benefit.¹⁵¹

149. For the impact of European commodities on Ottoman guild production see Charles Issawi, The Economic History of Turkey 1800-1914, Chicago, 1980, pp. 298-315. See also Caglar Keyder, State and Class in Turkey, London, 1987, pp. 29-31.

150. Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds", Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 1970, p. 161.

151. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Helliniki proxeniki ekthesis tou etous 1869" (Greek consular report for the year 1869), p. 249.

The conservative stance of Cypriots who had acquired the nationality of a European state was, amongst other things, acting as a check to the liberalization of labour relations. These Cypriots regarded themselves as part of the ruling elite and could not go along with reforms which would subject their property to taxation and render them equal to the reayas before the law.¹⁵² The decline of the esnafs in Cyprus however, being primarily a consequence of commercial penetration, could hardly be averted by administrative measures. In 1841 £9,430 worth of cotton manufactures were imported through the island's major port of Larnaca.¹⁵³ By 1876, two years before the British occupation, this figure had risen sharply to £63,000.¹⁵⁴ The picture was similar with regard to the total value of hardware goods. Imports through Larnaca and Limassol, which stood at £1,620 in 1863¹⁵⁵, rose to a more than seven fold £11,700 by 1876.¹⁵⁶

The decay of the system began to qualify communal feeling within trade communities in two important ways. The first was a result of the differences between wealthy and poor masters. Lists

152. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 202.

153. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., Table No 2, "Consular Report for the Year 1842", p. 9.

154. Ibid., "Return of the Imports at the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1876", pp. 217-218.

155. Ibid., "Report, General and Statistical, by Mr. Vice-Consul White, 1863", p. 85.

156. Ibid., "Report of Acting Consul Pierides on the Trade and Commerce of the Island of Cyprus for the Year 1876", pp. 215 and 222.

of rates imposed on the various trades during the very early years of British rule can shed light on the extent of this differentiation, given that these rates simply went on being collected as in Ottoman times.¹⁵⁷ According to the rates imposed by the municipality of Larnaca, in 1879, lucrative occupations such as merchants and retail spirit sellers were divided into four classes, paying from £5 and £6 respectively down to £1. There were also 17 three class and 11 two class occupations. Only the humblest of tradesmen, such as tobacconists, fishmongers and poulterers were listed as one class occupations.¹⁵⁸ In Nicosia, where there were as many as five classes to a trade, differences could be quite significant. The most humble candle makers, who were in the fifth class, paid two shillings and those on the top class paid 12. The difference with regard to bakers was even greater: two shillings to 15.¹⁵⁹

The second kind of dispute was between masters and journeymen. Though most enterprises were still small the range was becoming quite large - from masters working alone or with a

157. When the question of their approval arose Chief Justice Elliot Bovill observed: "I do not know under what law the proposed rates are chargeable though I am aware that rates have always been charged by municipalities in the same way" (SA1:7605, Minute by Bovill, December 18, 1880).

158. The Cyprus Gazette, March 10, 1879.

159. SA1:7687, "List of Trade Rates", enclosed in Nicosia Municipal Commission to Chief Secretary, May 19, 1883.

single apprentice to some big time operators. The aforementioned usta of shoemakers, Hadjigavrilis, employed one skilled operator of a knitting machine, eight kalfas and 22 cirağs.¹⁶⁰ Venieris, a master tailor from Constantinople, employed as many as 25 kalfas, all of them using needlework.¹⁶¹ There were not, as yet, fissures between employers and wage labourers as classes - the first artisan strike, that of Limassol's tailors, was only recorded in 1922. At the same time paternal authority was a lot less filial for those for whom the grade of journeyman became a lifetime status rather than an intermediate stage toward mastership. This became increasingly the prospect for several journeymen, who were therefore more likely at some stage to cease living with their masters and set up families of their own. They were even likely to fall out with their employer and, in contrast to the esnaf's norms and regulations, search for a new one. Toward the closing years of Ottoman rule traffic of kalfas and cirağs between different employers seems to have increased to such a degree that the Governor specially assigned to the usta of the farriers, Hadjihussein Nalban, the task of terrorizing journeymen of all trades away from changing their masters.¹⁶² Greek journeymen seem to have been more prone to violate esnaf regulations. This prob-

160. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "O Hadjigavrilis ferni makkan" (Hadjigavrilis imports a sowing machine), September 1, 1936.

161. Ibid., September 9, 1936.

162. Ibid., "O periphimos Nalban Basi" (The celebrated Nalban Basi), April 2, 1936.

ably explains the elevation of Nalban, to the post of ates-bası (chief of fire), heading all the trades working in metals, manned as they were almost exclusively by Greek artisans.¹⁶³ Smouldering ethnic opposition was in fact a third line of division in the bazaar. Archduke Salvatori, basing his evaluation on Nicosia, where Greeks were predominant in the bazaar, noted in 1873: "The majority of the Greeks are hostile to the Government, the chief reason for this being the heavy taxes. As a sort of protection the Greeks often employ the Russian eagle".¹⁶⁴

Towns were also the refuge of the unskilled labouring poor: servants and domestics to attend the wealthy, as well as swarms of hewers and carriers, porters and loaders and simple day-labourers. Unlike skilled workmen, who were enrolled in esnafs, these poor formed an unorganised rabble, devoid of any influence. In 1872, a report of the British Consul, Hamilton Lang, noted the dichotomy between skilled and unskilled. The latter were described as being lower in the social scale and their earnings as very uncertain, and amounting to half the earnings of skilled labourers.¹⁶⁵ Down the bottom the unskilled mixed with those who earned a precarious living at the margins of the town economy,

163. Ibid., "To pazarin ton kazandzidon" (The coppersmiths' bazaar), April 3, 1936.

164. Salvatori, Levkosia, op. cit., p. 59.

165. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., Consul Hamilton Lang to Earl Granville, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, February 20, 1872, enclosing a "Report upon the Industrial Classes of Cyprus", p. 315.

the physically infirm and beggars.

Though towns were roughly divided into Turkish and Greek sectors, by the end of Ottoman rule social distinctions were also beginning to be accentuated by geographical concentration into quarters. This evolution was more obvious in the coastal towns of Larnaca and Limassol, the commercial and consular centres of the island. In Limassol, a poorer area was expanding around the medieval castle and the port, besides the upper class quarter of two storey houses known as Maratheftoghitonia, by the church of Katholiki.¹⁶⁶ In Larnaca, the richer quarter encompassed the consulates around the church of Chrysopolitissa. Craftsmen and traders lived next to the churches of Saint John and Sotiros in the Mandika quarter, a derogatory term after the small number of resident gypsies (Mandis in the local idiom) who worked the metal trades.¹⁶⁷ The poorer of the labouring class, casual hands and beggars, crowded by the church of Saint Lazarus, in a quarter aptly known as Kalifadja (small huts).¹⁶⁸ Geographical separation tended to accentuate attitudes which were peculiar to distinct social classes. The consensus of informed opinion was that unskilled labour was at best to be pitied and at worst to be

166. Costas Pilavakis, I Lemosos se allous kairous (Limassol in another age), Limassol, 1977, pp. 145-146.

167. See Costas Kyrris, "Oi mandides tis Larnakas" (The gypsies of Larnaca), Andreas Rousounides ed., Praktika tou protou symposiou Kypriakis laographias (Proceedings of the first symposium on Cyprus folklore), Nicosia, 1985, pp. 55-112.

168. Neoclís Kyriazis, "Topothesiai: Skalas-Larnakos" (Locations of Scala-Larnaca), Paphos, Volume V [E'], 1940, pp. 287-288.

feared. Masterless men, who did not comply with the image of a servant in husbandry, in the workshop or in the house, were vagabonds by definition.

IV. The Ideology and Culture of the Labouring Poor

Governed as they were by an alien nation and suffering the humiliation of being treated and despised as inferior beings, the Greek lower classes intensely detested Ottoman rule. Hill notes that in 1833 the rebel leader Joannikios gathered the Greeks of the Carpas region around him by holding out to them the prospect of liberation from the Turkish yoke. Upon the promised arrival of a French ship, the peasants had risen armed with nothing better than sticks.¹⁶⁹ If they were to be left on their own, there was no question in the peasants' minds as to who would be doing the killing once the showdown had begun. When support was not forthcoming, from the towns or abroad, they resigned themselves to their station, their lucid understanding of the situation passing as innate docility in the accounts of outside observers. Hence in 1862, Horace White, British Vice-Consul in Cyprus, noted that political agitation or opposition on the part of the people to the constituted authority was almost unknown.¹⁷⁰

169. Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 166-167.

170. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Report, General and Statistical, by Mr. Vice-Consul White", p. 88.

Society seemed so rigidly hierarchical as to seem utterly unalterable. To some of the Greek poor utter resignation, or ragiadosyni, rather than protest was the customary response. Though after the Ottoman conquest sections of the Christian elite had espoused Islam in order to preserve their privileges, in later years this phenomenon was much more common amongst the tax-ridden rural poor. Entire villages, in regions such as Tyl-liria and the hinterland of Limassol, which were more difficult to patrol by the Bishops, apostatised to Islam. Retaining the Greek language and several practices of the Christian religion, they were known as Linovamvaki or "Linen-Cottons", the Cypriot variant of Crypto-Christianity.¹⁷¹ To the vast majority, who clung to the faith of their forefathers, common justice was more frequently violated by taxes and tax-collectors. In August 1878, six weeks into the British occupation, the Times correspondent reported:

The zaptiyes are in many places detested by the Greeks, for they have been the police sent to enforce the payment of taxes, and taxes and the rude circumstances of their collection are the main grievances under which the Greeks have suffered.¹⁷²

171. For this phenomenon see generally R. M. Dawkins, "The Crypto-Christians of Turkey", Byzantion, Volume VII, Brussels, 1933, pp. 247-275 (Particular reference to Cyprus in pp. 254-256). For Crypto-Christianity in Cyprus see Roland L. N. Michell, "A Muslim-Christian Sect in Cyprus", The Nineteenth Century and After, No. 735, May 1908, pp. 751-762. For the endemic poverty of the community see Menelaos Christodoulou, "Peri ton Linovamvakon" (On the Linovamvaki), Chrysanthos Kyprianou ed., Symposion laographias (Proceedings of symposium on folklore), Nicosia, 1972, p. 110.

172. The Times, "Cyprus", August 27, 1878.

Though all zaptiyes were Turks, they worked as agents of tax-farmers, who were, as a rule, Greeks; these were no less ruthless toward their co-religionists in extracting revenue. At the time of the British occupation, tax-agents working for Yangos Araouzos, a prominent tax-farmer in Limassol, were known to be in the habit of establishing themselves in the house of a peasant who failed to pay his dues. The unfortunate debtor would be physically forced under a table and kept there until he would somehow find the sum required.¹⁷³ Such economic and political oppression, the fate of the common reaya, was endured in the knowledge that this was an island province, too close to mainland Turkey and too far away from anywhere else.

In 1872 Theodoros Peristianis, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaca, wrote a comprehensive report on the social and political situation in Cyprus and on the position of the Greeks in particular. The report was very illuminating because it was confidential and because the author, who was a Cypriot and a graduate in law from the Sorbonne, gave an educated assessment and appreciation of the position of the Greek community and touched upon questions of the national consciousness of the Greek Cypriots. Peristianis noted that prior to the Greek revolution

173. Costas Constantinides, I Angliki katokhi tis Kyprou tou 1878 (The English occupation of Cyprus in 1878), Nicosia, 1930, p. 110.

there were not more than 30 people who could write proper Greek in the island's towns. Progress had since that time begun to be made:

In villages however people were not even aware of the existence of letters. Hence we can deduce the level of intellectual development of an enslaved people, who had also for centuries remained in abject ignorance; slavery has crushed the mind, the body and the hearts of the people.

According to Peristianis, at the time of writing, one third of the population in towns could read and write proper Greek and several of them could understand the Greek spoken in mainland Greece. The spread of education had been beneficial and elements of national identity were beginning to be detectable [εθνική τις χροιά υποφαίνεται παντού]. Still, the accredited representative of the Greek kingdom referred to the contrast between Greeks and Turks on the island, and made a salient point:

The prevailing mutual disfavour [δυσμένεια] is mostly religious rather than ethnic. The Christian is not aware of his history, his origins, his nation. He considers all Orthodox to be co-nationals [Ομοεθνείς του θεωρεί πάντα Ορθόδοξον].

For the inhabitants of Cyprus therefore, like other peoples of the 19th century, the nation was a historical category. The Vice-Consul outlined the elements which were missing under the circumstances of Turkish rule, and through which the Greeks of Cyprus would attain national consciousness:

Should a breeze of freedom blow for a while on the island and a national sense of direction be inspired in the spirit of the inhabitants, a teaching urging them along the road to nationhood, and these Christians will recover from the lethargy in which they have been cast by so many centuries of slavery. That day however will dawn very late.

The Vice-Consul referred to the Archbishop as a man who prided himself on his numerous privileges and prerogatives, most of which had in fact been abandoned to the Turks: "Such debauchery, such individual and social degeneration".¹⁷⁴ Receiving no guidance and inspiration from the Greek establishment, the condition of the labouring poor made sad reporting in consular despatches. H. Vassiliades, the last Greek Vice-Consul of the Ottoman period, reported in July 1876:

I have unfortunately come across a greater evil, the fact, that is, that the spirit of Hellenism in some places is asleep and in others is totally non-existent, owing perhaps to the continuous pressure exerted by the Ottomans...¹⁷⁵

Attempts toward an intellectual and national revival were feeble; they were manifested by the set up of reading clubs [αναγνώστῆρια]: Proodos and Zeno in Nicosia, Isotis in Limassol, Kitiefs in Larnaca. In these clubs, lectures were delivered, by learned Greeks from Alexandria, Smyrna and Constantinople and newspapers such as Neologos from Constantinople and Amalthia from Smyrna were also read on the premises.¹⁷⁶ Though membership was limited to the upper classes, these clubs also had an effect upon the rest of the population.¹⁷⁷ Ethnic awareness amongst the

174. IAYE: 1872, File 58/3, Peristianis, op. cit.

175. IAYE: 1877, File AAK/A2, H. Vassiliades, Vice-Consul of Greece in Larnaca, to A. A. Contostavlos, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Athens, July 27, 1876.

176. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Oi palioi kai oi neoi" (The old and the new), January 19, 1936.

177. For the impact of such clubs toward cultivating the Greek national identity amongst the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire

Greeks was certainly stronger in towns, whose inhabitants began giving their children Hellenic names after the Greek War of Independence. Professor Simos Menardos noted that as a tribute to Greece's struggle, the Greeks of Cyprus preferred the names of heroes and victors such as Hercules and Achilles and of gallant generals such as Miltiadis, Leonidas, Themistocles and Alexander.¹⁷⁸ Town dwellers became in turn godfathers to village children, spreading such names amongst the peasantry.¹⁷⁹ Until the beginning of the 20th century Magda Ohnefalsch-Richter noted that the educated inhabitants of towns were more prone to give their children ancient Greek names than their rural counterparts, who preferred names of Christian Saints.¹⁸⁰

In remote rural regions a man's native land could have been little more than the area inhabited by his ancestors, the age old framework in which generation had succeeded generation. It stopped at the boundaries of one's familiar environment, whether it was the village with its hamlets, or the town with its extra-mural jurisdiction. Professor Ludwig Ross, a visitor to the is-

see geneally Paschalis Kitromilides, "Greek Irredentism in Asia Minor and Cyprus", Middle Eastern Studies, Volume 26, No. 1, 1990, pp. 8-9.

178. Simos Menardos, "Peri ton onomaton ton Kyprion" (On the names of Cypriots), Athina, Volume 16, Issues 3 & 4, Athens, 1904, p. 273.

179. Sakellarios, Kypriaka, op. cit., Vol. B', p. 64 [ξδ'].

180. Ohnefalsch-Richter (Marangou), Hellinika, op. cit., p. 197.

land in 1845, having spent some time in the village of Akanthou, on the Northeastern coast, wrote of the Cypriots' sense of location in the wider world:

I had to traverse my path of yesterday through the same pass which connects the lonely village with its 40 or 50 families with the rest of the world. What isolation! The men, sometimes but seldom, cross the mountains into the Mesaoria, and even as far as the twelve-hours-away market of Nicosia, which is for them the centre of the universe...Such conditions which we find again in the Southern half of Rhodes, partly explain the crass ignorance, the mere stupidity, the dark superstition, the distrustful repugnance to all that is strange and unusual, which mark the inhabitants of the smaller islands of Greece.¹⁸¹

The non-existent communications seriously retarded the development of the political and national awareness of the population. The situation seems to have hardly improved by the time of the British occupation. Admiral Lord John Hay reported on July 20, 1878, less than two weeks after he landed in Cyprus:

Roads hardly exist at all; there is only one road that can be dignified by that name, and is the one which connects Larnaca with Nicosia; its condition is as bad as possible. The rest are mere tracks, rarely passable by bullock carts, and generally only fit for mules and camels.¹⁸²

Such isolation enhanced the clergy's influence over the population, though this sway was never complete or free from contradictions. The poor in Cyprus, as in most countries, left no written records of their views of their spiritual leaders. At the

181. Ludwig Ross, A Journey to Cyprus (February and March 1845), Translated from the German by Claude Delaval Cobham, Nicosia, 1910, pp. 52-53.

182. Cited in C. V. Bellamy, A Monograph of the Main Roads of Cyprus, Nicosia, 1903, p. vii.

same time, the Greek senior clergy, being so deeply involved in the process of surplus extraction and so visibly engaged in political activity and intrigue, could hardly fail to be identified as accessories to Ottoman officialdom. This was a widespread phenomenon in parts of the Greek world which were under Ottoman rule.¹⁸³ In the particular case of Cyprus, the Church's immense accumulation of patrimony was a trigger of anti-clericalism. Contempt or hatred of it amongst the lower classes were nursed behind the facade of respect for the senior clergy and were reflected in a demotic song of the island, composed circa 1700, on the conflict between members of the Greek ruling elite 30 years earlier:

If the Turks have profaned the lands of Cyprus
no one is to blame except the Bishops
they are the real Paşas of Cyprus
in fact they are not Bishops but wolves
all evil which has befallen upon wretched Cyprus
is the doing of these accursed ones
and they climb and stretch upon the throne
sheaving the fleece and leaving the lamb to the wolves
I have a lot in mind to write about them
but I dread their curse and better say no more.¹⁸⁴

An early indication of the extent of popular anti-clericalism in Cyprus was given in 1788 by the admission of Archimandrite Kyprianos, a sophisticated representative of the senior clergy:

183. See generally Richard Clogg, "Anti-clericalism in Pre-independence Greece", Derek Baker ed., The Orthodox Churches and the West, Oxford, 1976.

184. See an edition of the song in T. Papadopoulos, "To asma ton diermineon" (The song of the dragomans), Kypriakai Spoudai, Vol. XLV [ME'], 1981, Nicosia, p. 100.

Above all the people had the evil habit of not ascribing their misfortunes to those responsible and not blaming the insatiable and pitiless greed of their rulers for the increase in indebtedness. Not only today but ever since, the people have been blaming irrespectively their spiritual fathers. Alas, ingratitude among Cypriots has been a very old heritage.¹⁸⁵

Even when, in 1839, the collection of the tithes was taken over by lay Kocabasıs, the clergy still burdened the population with dues for their own coffers - zeteiai and canonica. In 1871 an Archdeacon wrote to the Archbishop that certain inhabitants of Clerou village had refused to pay their zeteia: "Then the zaptiye did his duty and put them in prison". Upon their release the villagers insisted in their refusal and, according to the report, a scuffle followed after which the unfortunate debtors were sent back to jail.¹⁸⁶

Canonica were also exacted by sheer force majeure. The bitter resentment this entailed was demonstrated during a court dispute in 1880, two years into the British occupation, between the Bishop of Paphos and the people of Emba village, who refused to pay their dues. In the proceedings of the case, which were recorded verbatim, can be found information which is available nowhere else, because it was only here that the ordinary Cypriot could be heard speaking for himself. Witness Hadji Filippos Yeorghi testified: "The Bishop used to send zaptiyes to collect this money from the people...They had to pay, for when they didn't pay

185. Kyprianos, Historia, op. cit., p. 491.

186. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File VI [ΣΤ'], Item 61, Archdeacon Joachim to Archbishop Sophronios, December 12, 1871.

they were put into prison..." In 1877, the witness was imprisoned with another seven people for the same reason. The fourth witness, Nicolas Hadji Michael, stated in court: "Three years ago we gave nothing to the Bishop though it was made up afterwards. I was 8 days in prison for this and I didn't pay as I hoped to get justice. The people could say nothing, they were always forced by zaptiyes". Finally, Christos, the agent of the villagers of Emba, gave a fatalistic account of their predicament: "What was the use for us to petition? We would never have been listened to. He could then do what he liked, I mean the Bishop".¹⁸⁷

All was not oppression however. A degree of loyalty on the part of the Greek labouring poor toward their clergy had been preserved throughout Ottoman rule. The nature of the regime left no recourse to the wretched members of the Greek Millet except through the political intervention of their Bishops. In fact, within the framework of loyalty to the Porte the Archbishop could stage a spirited defence against the abuse of his flock by the administration. In the Archive of the Archbishops of Cyprus a large part of each diocese's papers, down to the last year of Ottoman rule, is made up of petitions from reayas, asking the Bishops' assistance against abuses and humiliations inflicted by

187. For the complete transcript of the court proceedings see SA1:1878/Box 4, HQ/1266, "Case of the Bishop of Paphos vs the people of Emba". Enclosure in Arthur Young, Assistant Commissioner of Paphos, to Colonel George R. Greaves, Chief Secretary, March 25, 1879.

the Turks. In June 1872 the Archbishop was asked to intervene because Turks, in the town of Lefka, were reported to be molesting Greek boys by force;¹⁸⁸ the Christian religion was insulted by Turks in October 1874;¹⁸⁹ on February 12, 1876, a Mülâzim (Police Lieutenant) had taken the inhabitants of a village out of their church, beaten them up, and then set up a feast for himself and his zaptiyes.¹⁹⁰ Even in the comparatively liberal environment of Larnaca, and as late as May 1877, the Kadı had refused to accept Christian evidence in his court, in spite of being reminded of the provisions of the 1876 constitution.¹⁹¹ The list of such appeals to the Bishops could go on.

The Cypriots' very low level of cultural development contributed to their deference toward the Church. Hackett referred to rustics as soaked in superstition and totally dependent on the clergy for their religious opinions. The language of the Gospel and church services was New Testament Greek, which had, prior to the British occupation, become almost an unknown tongue. Hackett also described the population as being very respectful of the deity:

188. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File VI [ET'], Item 41, Constantinos Hadjipetros to Archbishop Sophronios, February 18, 1872.

189. Ibid., Item 43, Christophakis Gavriel to Archbishop Sophronios, October 2, 1874.

190. Ibid., Item 48, Loizis Georgha to Archbishop Sophronios, February 12, 1876.

191. Ibid., Item 49, G. Malikides to Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium, May 1, 1877.

As a people the Cypriots are very attentive to the outward observances of their religion, a fact which all who have seen them at their devotions can testify. In the churches the men are as conspicuous by their presence as in countries farther west are by their absence.

The author cited instances according to which people would rise at midnight to be present at services which lasted for hours.¹⁹² The clergy also exercised command over the poor's leisure which, given the irregular organisation of work, was not sharply distinguishable from labour. Out of 22 fairs, where feasting was closely related to the marketing of produce, 19 were attached to the Church's calendar and were held during the namedays of saints and on the premises of monasteries and churches.¹⁹³

Apart from the Prelates, lay Kocabasıs were also anxious that the lower classes should attend public worship, which would help them accustom themselves to the fact that the existing order of the world was the dispensation of Divine Providence. In 1891 the Limassol newspaper Salpinx recollected the idealised past of religious piety:

Do you remember that a few years ago the great ones in the towns had ever since the whip of control in their hands and would check upon and always insult those whom they considered as ignoring or neglecting their religious customs? Do you recall that they forced people to close their shops during Sundays and

192. Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 281.

193. Theodotos Kanthos, "I kathimerini zoi ton Kyprion kata to 18 kai 19 aiona" (The daily life of Cypriots during the 18th and 19th centuries), Dialexeis Laikou Panepistimiou (Popular University Lectures), [1], Nicosia, 1984, pp. 214-217.

religious holidays?...Do you remember how shy were those of the lower class and how the young ones honoured and respected their elders?¹⁹⁴

Christian belief and practice provided the framework within which people were expected to live. The physical presence of the Church was everywhere apparent; in paintings and gravures of Christian villages and town parishes the largest and most substantial building is the church. With the exception of a small educated circle in Larnaca and Limassol, intellectual activity revolved round the precepts of the Church. Only two bookshops existed for the needs of the literate public of Nicosia, one of which also sold other kinds of merchandise. Books were as a rule imported from Smyrna and were all of a religious content, such as O Apostolos (The Apostle), To Psaltiri (The Book of Psalms), Amartolon Sotiria (Salvation of Sinners), Pnevmatikos Cathrephtis (Reflection of the Soul), Vioi ton Ayion (Lives of Saints). Constantinides notes that the booksellers of Nicosia were amazed when a couple of teachers from Greece, who had come to work in Cyprus, asked to purchase novels for their spare time.¹⁹⁵

194. Salpinx, "I exakhriosis afxei" (Wickedness on the increase), November 11, 1891.

195. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Vivliopolai kai vivliopolia" (Booksellers and bookshops), September 12, 1936.

Educational affairs were managed ex-officio by the Prelates and the most generous of lay benefactors. In 1876 two of the four members of the Nicosia school committee were the secretary, Christophakis Gavriel, and Christodoulos Severis, both of whom were prominent tax-farmers.¹⁹⁶ The education system of the Greek community was primarily geared toward the moulding of an ordered and stratified society. The Director of Nicosia's Girls' School, delivering the opening lecture for the year 1869, in the presence of the members of the Holy Synod and Nicosia's School Committee, pointed out the following:

There is a proper breeding appropriate for each situation. To the sons of rulers [ἡγεμόνων] it bestows an early training in justice and compassion, both of which are imperative for the Government of peoples. Another kind of breeding can advise the rich how to utilise their money for the public benefit, as sound treasurers of wealth. To everybody a proper breeding is a precept for piety toward God, love for their neighbour, diligence and autarky.¹⁹⁷

For the clergy in particular, literacy became relevant because religion was practically the sole component in the schooling allocated to the population. The so-called Paidagogia, which was the standard text for the elementary schools, was a collection of prayers and church sermons.¹⁹⁸ The alphabet was similarly

196. For the membership of the committee see Theodore Papadopoulos, Codix scholion Lefkosias, Nicosia, 1991, p. 284. For the social position of C. Gavriel see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Oi palioi kai oi neoi" (The old and the new), January 19, 1936. For C. Severis see ibid., September 15, 1936.

197. Papadopoulos, Codix, op. cit., p. 157.

198. Loizos Philippou, Ta Hellinika grammata en Kypro epi Tourkokratias (Greek scholarship in Cyprus during Turkish rule), Nicosia, 1930, p. 347.

taught by simple poems, where each letter was associated with a verse on the life of Christ. Religious books were therefore primers as well as sources of moral education; worldly matters were thought of as being provided by religious instruction and the rudiments of arithmetic. Hence the popular poem:

Go to your teacher
to be taught the Book of Psalms
to be taught the Apostle
and the golden candle
to be taught figures
so that nobody can cheat you.¹⁹⁹

Secondary education was the preserve of the very wealthy and was provided in Nicosia, Larnaca and Limassol up to the age of sixteen. These were the only children who received a training in mathematics, geography, history and ancient Greek.²⁰⁰ Only a handful could afford to complete their secondary education outside the island. At all levels, elementary and secondary, the emphasis on moral training was paramount. An encyclical of Archbishop Makarios I, on December 31, 1861, urged parents to concern themselves with their children's regular attendance at school, so that they would be kept away from company which would corrupt their morals. Pupils should moreover be taught "to stand devoutly while in church and behave decently and properly in the streets and the bazaar; because, if they behave otherwise, they show themselves to be no better than the illiterate ones".²⁰¹

199. Cited in Sakellarios, Kypriaka, Vol. B', op. cit., p. 42.

200. Philippou, Grammata, op. cit., p. 358.

201. Ibid., p. 107.

Similarly, in September 1870, the Director of Nicosia's Girls' School urged parents "to implant in the child's mind virtuous morals and above all the duty of unquestioning obedience [to χρέος αδυστάκτου υπακοής]".²⁰²

School discipline was maintained by severe methods: pupils were beaten and spat upon by the teacher, forced to stand for long hours or kneel on vetches, loaded with a heavy stone or humiliated by having bones of animals being hung on them.²⁰³ A common form of punishment was the falangas, in which the pupil's feet were immobilized in wooden grips and then beaten on the soles. Instances have been cited of the pupil being beaten until blood streamed out of his nostrils and of nailing his ear to the wall.²⁰⁴ The apex of this ingenuity occurred in the village of Pissouri, where a teacher caused the death of his pupil.²⁰⁵ The Lancastrian system, which was in force at the time of the occupation had, as in Britain 50 years earlier, also been used to impress authority as intrinsic to the island's education system.²⁰⁶

202. Papadopoulos, Codix, op. cit., p. 183.

203. Philippou, Grammata, op. cit., p. 358.

204. Georghios Prodromou, "I ekpaidefsi stin Kypro to 18 kai 19 aiona" (Education in Cyprus during the 18th and 19th centuries), Dialexeis Panepistimiou, [1], op. cit., p. 303.

205. This information is given by both Prodromou, p. 303 and Philippou, p. 349.

206. For the authoritarian aspects of Lancaster's method see Richard Johnson, "Notes on the Schooling of the English Working Class", Roger Dale ed., Schooling and Capitalism, London, 1976, pp. 47-48.

The protoscholoi (monitors) were used not only for teaching but mainly for reinforcing order in class and, after school, for leading younger pupils, in parade, to their homes.²⁰⁷

Though the education system disseminated a Greek consciousness, for the literate members of the establishment there was no contradiction between being Greeks and being loyal Ottoman subjects. Discipline in fact should be displayed in the face of all powers that be, regardless of nationality. In an oration delivered in 1861, the director of the Girl's School in Nicosia referred to Cyprus' outstanding natural beauty bequeathed by the all powerful arm of a philhellene God. The island was a nerve of the Greek nation [γέρας] which had impressed the world with the wisdom of Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides.²⁰⁸ In conclusion, the speech expressed the immeasurable and humble gratitude of the fatherland

to our most gracious and wise King, Sultan Abdul Medjid. His all powerful protection, most wise justice, most excellent wisdom and patronage of culture warms favourably the existence of our education system and contributes to our felicity. Being his most loyal subjects we never stop offering our humble prayers for the health, salvation and strengthening of his conspicuous throne...²⁰⁹

207. For the disciplinary function of the allilodidaktiki (monitorial) system in Cyprus see in Alithia:

a) "Pos eida tin Lemeson kata to 1869" (How I saw Limassol in 1869), July 9, 1937;

b) "Pos eida...- Synithies kai tropoi zois" (How I saw...- Customs and ways of life), July 23, 1937.

208. Papadopoulos, Codix, op. cit., p. 54.

209. Ibid., p. 57.

Having addressed in equally flattering terms the Archbishop, who was present at the ceremony, the orator concluded:

Hurrah for the Great Sultan Abdul Medjid
Hurrah for His Excellency Hairullah Paşa
Hurrah for His Beatitude Archbishop Makarios!²¹⁰

Apart from schooling for the young and preaching for the adult, the conspicuous display of wealth and power impressed upon the population the tangible advantages to be gained by soliciting the favour of Prelates and lay Kocabasıs. Constantinides noted that at the time of publishing his series of reminiscences, in 1936, older people in Nicosia still recalled with wonder the wealth of Hadjikyrykeys, the most prominent of tax-farmers. His house was the largest in Nicosia and his family lived like princes; the son rode to church on a horse with a saddle enamelled with gold and reins of pure gold; he attended mass standing on a specially laid carpet.²¹¹ The Church's immense property was also utilised to enhance the clergy's prestige; gold was lavishly used in the binding of gospels, the embroidery of the Bishops' vestments and the making of church vessels. The late Dr. Venedictos Englezakis, a theologian in the archbishopric of Cyprus, reflected upon the Church exceeding in wealth even the Evkaf, in a province of a Muslim empire:

The wealth which now surrounded the reaya made him feel that he too was human, proud to be christian after all, a descendant of kings from his faith, a co-religionist of the Czars, whose golden donations were

210. Ibid., p. 58.

211. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Dekaties kai dekatistes" (The tithe and tithe-farmers", September 19, 1936.

to be seen all over the place. After all, what did Muhammad have which could rank with the property of Kykko or Makhairas?²¹²

Did the labouring poor really share in the pride inherent upon such wealth or were they aware that this was simply the surplus extracted from their wretched existence? For their part, the lay and clerical elite could flaunt their double standards under the security of the Turks. For those not prepared to live propping up church and state, Ottoman rule offered no outlets. The population generally acquiesced in their fate, those more amenable to such deference being the poorest and weakest. Given the lack of government institutions for the care of the sick and poor of the Orthodox Millet, rudimentary provision in this field was mostly the preserve of the clergy and secular men of substance.²¹³ Limassol's prominent inhabitants were also known to offer bread to the poor on Saturdays, in the memory of their deceased relatives.²¹⁴ Alms were also customarily given to beggars at Easter and Christmas, usually by the local Bishop. Charity was more widely distributed in times of distress, when

212. Venedictos Englezakis, "I Ekklisia tis Kyprou ton 18 kai 19 aiona" (The Church of Cyprus during the 18th and 19th centuries), Dialexeis Panepistimiou, [1], op. cit., pp. 318-319.

213. See generally Loizos Philippou, "Erga philanthropias stin Kypro tin epokhi tis Tourkokratias" (Acts of charity in Cyprus during the era of Turkish rule), Paphos, Vol. A', 1935, pp. 64-67. By the same author see Ekklisia, op. cit., pp. 255-258.

214. Alithia, "Synithies" (Customs), op. cit., July 23, 1937.

the wealthy, whose houses were well-stocked with supplies for the duration of the year, would provide food for those who were sick and hungry.²¹⁵

V. The Politics of Paternalism

These donations played a central function in the maintenance of the social and political status quo, given that those who accepted without being able to return, naturally faced subordination. Charity became a means of social control by imposing an obligation upon the receiver: to behave in an acceptable manner, if only by expressing gratitude and humility. This system of norms and values bred a sense of reciprocity in the relations between the Christian elite and the reayas, which guaranteed and legitimised the corporate social order, at all levels. No cause was more worthy for those fit to be of consequence than the foundation and financing of schools. The village gentry, who were in daily contact with the populace, were no less careful than the Prelates and the great Kocabasıs in maintaining an image of paternal responsibilities.

A history of the village of Lysi, Mesaoria, written in 1970 by Savvas Xystouris, himself an exponent of the rural elite's value system, provides interesting insight into their daily conduct in rural society. Panayis Yacoumis, the wealthiest man of the village at the time of the British occupation, had throughout

215. Ibid., "Prosopa kai symvanda kata to 1872 eis Lemeson" (Persons and events during 1872 in Limassol), September 10, 1937.

his life derived a great deal of his authority by performing several of the functions of the state. He was the local magistrate, settling disputes and keeping order amongst a great number of people. During Ottoman times he was associate judge in the court at the neighbouring village of Vatili. The British maintained his position and the district judge upheld his image, by rising upon Yacoumis' entry in court. Yacoumis exhibited himself as a father figure toward the people of his community. Upon the arrival of the tax-collectors he would guarantee the payment of those who could not afford it, or would even pay their taxes. He built three fountains to serve the needs of his fellow villagers. His hegemonic charisma was enlarged by the fact that he was known to have shared in the powers of life and death, through an intervention of his, which spared a man from the gallows.²¹⁶ Calculated gestures and ritual appearances reinforced his paternalist composure about the community. E. P. Thompson, in his study of the English gentry in the eighteenth century, has observed that in performing public functions their visibility was formidable and had much of the studied self-consciousness of public theatre:

We have here a studied and elaborate hegemonic style, a theatrical role in which the great were schooled in infancy and which they maintained until death. And if we speak of it as theatre, it is not to diminish its importance. A great part of politics and law is always theatre; once a social system has become "set", it does not need to be endorsed daily by exhibi-

216. Savvas Xystouris, I comopoli tis Lysis (The town of Lysi), Nicosia, 1980, p. 54.

tions of power (although occasional punctuations of force will be made to define the system's tolerance).²¹⁷

Yacoumis organised large feasts, to which he donated his mutton; his carts of oxen would be at the head of the convoy, carrying materials for the erection of the community's church; he would make a customary late entry to church, which was packed with worshippers; whenever he passed from the streets of the village old and young would stand up as a mark of respect; upon his entry into the village coffee-shop all occupants would offer him their chair. Naturally, such exhibitions of authority did exact returns in the field of politics; Yacoumis was unanimously voted as president in all committees in the community.²¹⁸

These realities defined the outlines of the rudimentary electoral politics, which were introduced in Cyprus after the Tanzimat reforms. In the Meclis Idare, in ostensible imitation of the constitutional practices prevailing in Europe, membership of the electorate was conditional upon the property qualification. The franchise was extended to Ottoman subjects who were older than 18 and paid a minimum of 50 piastres in vergi (property tax). Candidates for office had to be at least 30 years old and pay a minimum of 100 piastres.²¹⁹ Given the lack of records, the

217. Thompson, "Patrician Society", op. cit., p. 389.

218. Xystouris, Lysi, op. cit., p. 55.

219. For a description of the electoral process in Cyprus during the Tanzimat period see AAK, Sophronios Papers, File IV [Δ'], Item 170, "Odegiai peri tou tropou eklogis ton melon symvoulion ton geronton ekastis enorias kai khoriou" (Instructions on the mode of electing councils of elders in each parish and village), 5 month of Muharrem, 1285 (1868).

degree of popular participation in the electoral process cannot be accurately assessed. Though ownership of land was practically universal, the limit of 50 piastres was quite considerable and must have left out of the franchise a large portion of the adult male population. However, even those who were included in the franchise would engage in what might be described as dutiful voting, within a deferential and familial concept of politics. The predominance of households of substance in the process of government was noted, a few weeks into the British occupation, by Dixon Hepworth, a visitor to the island. Hepworth described the election of headman of a local community and added:

This rustic magistrate is assisted by a council of elders, who are chosen, like himself, in free assembly, once a year. Like the elders of a Russian village and a Bedouin camp, these men are heads of families. As a rule, too, they are owners of the soil...²²⁰

In an open ballot the lower classes were anxious not to displease their betters, partly out of prudence and partly out of accepted custom. This seemed a widespread phenomenon in the Empire. In 1864 Georges Perrot, a French traveller in Asia Minor, observed on the working of representative institutions:

There is no representation of the community in the true sense of the word in these councils, just as there is no trace of any real home rule. There is no order, no system to be found in any of these things. Instead one relies on common sense, on common practice and tradition, and one considers it natural that authority should be in the hands of the wealthy and the most able.²²¹

220. Dixon Hepworth, British Cyprus, London, 1879, pp. 33-34.

221. Cited in Halil Inalcik, "Application of the Tanzimat and its Social Effects", Ottoman Empire, op. cit., p. 16.

The establishment's view of the political system suggested human warmth in mutually assenting relationships. In 1892, 14 years into British rule, the Larnaca newspaper Enosis harked back to the paternalist times of the Ottoman period,

the blessed times, during which all meetings were dominated by the prominent people of our town and the rest used to listen to them and obey their words as if they were the oracles of Pythia*²²²...Those were the days when every one was aware of his worth and therefore abided, on every communal affair, by the station which was due to him. Inferiors would respect and honour their superiors, and they in turn would show affection to those who behaved properly. In a word, there was love and honesty amongst all classes in society, and consequently there was activity and progress in communal matters in general.²²³

How much of this was genuinely the result of the labouring poor's respect, of appreciation toward their betters' performance of public service, or perhaps of impotent revolt against abject dependency? The two seemed in fact to co-exist.

222. * A woman in ancient Greece thought to be able to foretell the future.

223. Enosis, "I ton koinotikon mas katastasis" (The situation of our communal affairs), December 5, 1892.

CHAPTER 4

THE FOUNDATIONS OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

I. Colonial Rule - Hope and Disillusionment

In July 1878 the transformation of Cyprus from an Ottoman province to a British colony effected a major overhaul in the social and political set up of the island. This was not so much the outcome of a policy of vision from the government in London; the first British officials on the spot were military men, and the civilians who succeeded them, moulded in the colonial spirit of the era, conducted themselves as enlightened despots, at best. The executive was firmly and unequivocally in the hands of the British. By Order in Council, on October 7, 1878, executive authority rested with the High Commissioner, answerable to the Colonial Office. He was assisted by an Executive Council, nominated by him and made up by another four senior British officials. The same Order in Council established a seven member Legislative Council. This was also headed by the High Commissioner who nominated the rest of its members: three official members who were senior British functionaries of the Government, and three unofficial members, who were Cypriots.²²⁴

224. See the Cyprus Gazette, No 1, November 5, 1878 for the composition of the Executive and Legislative Councils. The Cypriots were Fuat Bey who headed the Temyiz Mahkemesi (Court of Appeal), Richard Mattei, the largest landowner of the island, and George Glykys, an associate of Archbishop Sophronios and grandson of Dragoman Hadjigeorgakis.

However, what struck at the root of maladministration and corruption endemic in the Ottoman system was not the establishment of these institutions as such but the introduction of what the British regarded as a commonsense approach in the running of public affairs. Esmee Scott-Stevenson, wife of the first British Commissioner of Kyrenia, noted on the ingrained custom of peşkes, from those expecting to be served by the Government:

Baskets of fruit, eggs, vegetables, honey, cheese, game and poultry were, after my husband's appointment, brought daily until people found that their presents were never accepted. Wherever the Turk governs, throughout Cyprus at least, it is the custom to bring presents, under the belief that acceptance of them binds the acceptor to do something in return when occasion shall arise;²²⁵

The same modernising spirit was exemplified by the British in the reform of the island's legal and judicial system. A Supreme Court was established in Nicosia and the Commissioners exercised supervisory functions over the District Courts, which continued for a while to apply Ottoman law, to the extent thereto that it was gradually superseded by English law. Corruption was drastically curtailed by the introduction of English procedures and equitable legal practices. According to Lushington Philips, the Government's Legal Adviser, each District Commissioner should have to sit as member of the local Daavi Court so that

he could with the more decency advise himself of what was taking place there day by day, and that his counsel and control would operate as a check on those

225. Esmee Scott-Stevenson, Our Home in Cyprus, London, 1880, p. 124.

grave abuses of justice that have brought Eastern Courts into such disrepute, and could not be endured under English rule.²²⁶

The process of rationalisation of the legal apparatus received further impetus when, on November 30, 1882, an appropriate Order in Council replaced the Ottoman Courts with Assize, District and Magistrate Courts. In rural areas, Village Courts were set up to deal with minor cases.²²⁷

The reform of the judiciary had an immediate and far-reaching impact, similar to what in other countries had been achieved by the efforts of an active and liberal middle class. In the minds of ordinary Greeks, who had been heavily disadvantaged in the courts of the House of Islam, the reliability of law under the British left a long-lasting impression. The proverb of Ottoman times: "The Kadı molests your mother, sue him anywhere you like", contrasted with the verses of folk ballads during early British rule, praising the ethnic impartiality of the new justice "of which neither hoca*²²⁸ nor priest is afraid".²²⁹ British justice

226. Foreign Office, Confidential, (4388), Part III, Further Correspondence Respecting Affairs in Cyprus, 1879-1880. Minute by Legal Adviser L. Philips, August 5, 1879. Enclosure in Despatch of Major-General Biddulph to the Marquis of Salisbury, December 30, 1879, (London, 1880), p. 15.

227. For the significance of these changes see G. S. Georghallides, "British Rule in Cyprus, 1878-1960: A Short Re-appraisal", Pacific Quarterly, Hamilton - New Zealand, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1979.

228. * Turkish religious scribe.

229. Kyriacos Papadopoulos, O perivoitos Yallouris (The notorious Yallouris), Limassol, 1895.

was also viewed as incorruptible toward both rich and poor, unlike Ottoman courts, which were known to be manipulated by the wealthy classes. In the words of another popular bard:

The law holding at present is no funny business
once the evidence is there, money is of no use.²³⁰

The British had thereby introduced into the island the trappings of a bourgeois society: formal equality in respect of each inhabitant's rights and obligations vis à vis the state. Overnight the institutional supports of a corporate and hierarchical society had formally come to an end. The most obvious losers in this process of rationalisation of the judiciary were the Turks, who protested against everyone of Britain's liberalizing reforms. At the same time as protest however, both the leadership and mass of the community clung close to the benevolent rule of Britain and against the Greeks, who outnumbered them by four to one. Prior to World War I the Turks of Cyprus made themselves a lot less visible than the Greeks, until Young Turk ideas began to influence the intelligentsia of their community. There is general consensus amongst authors on this point. Charles Beckingham has described the Turks during the first 30 years of British rule as intellectually inactive and politically apathetic.²³¹ Unlike the

230. Christos Jabouras, I angliki efprepia en Kypro (The decent behaviour of the English in Cyprus), Larnaca, 1897.

231. Charles Beckingham, "Islam and Turkish Nationalism in Cyprus", Die Welt des Islams, Leiden, Volume V, 1958, p. 69.

Greeks, who edited a newspaper in August 1878, a mere eight weeks into British rule, the first Turkish newspaper, Saded, came out eleven years later.²³² The situation of the Turkish community has been correctly attributed by Dr. Michael Attalides to the lack of a Turkish Cypriot bourgeoisie, who would express dissatisfaction with facets of colonial policy.²³³

Amongst the Greek lower classes, who looked forward to a relief from the ethnic and social subjugation associated with Ottoman rule, the occupation raised great expectations. According to the Times correspondent accompanying the first British contingent to Limassol, the people of the town, who were mainly Greeks, took a holiday that day. The correspondent added:

As the waving lines of the Union Jack appeared over the edge of the battlements, the populace who were outside the fort saluted the flag of their new rulers with a cheer that seemed full of heartiness - as no doubt it was, for the Greeks most certainly welcome our arrival with gratitude and hope.²³⁴

For the mass of the population the transfer of the island to a Christian power and the declarations of freedom and justice were thought as tantamount to the demise of the oppressive tithe system. The Times correspondent added with a measure of anxiety:

232. Jacovos Tenedios, "Anaskopisi tou Tourkokypriakou typou 1878-1955" (A survey of the Turkish Cypriot press), Dialexeis Laikou Panepistimiou (Popular University Lectures), [2], Nicosia, 1986, p. 78.

233. Michael A. Attalides, Cyprus - Nationalism and International Politics, New York, 1979, p. 41.

234. The Times, "Cyprus", August 8, 1878.

This question of taxation is at present a most difficult one, for there is good reason to fear that the Greeks have contracted an idea that the advent of the English means for them absolute remission of all burdens and all claims of the state upon them.²³⁵

The semblance of freedom inaugurated with British rule let loose a rebellious disposition amongst the labouring poor, who had for generations been seething to settle accounts with their oppressors, if only for a day. News that Bessim Pasa had surrendered his authority to Lord John Hay, had so excited the agricultural populace that kolcus (field watchmen), memurs (rural officials) and zaptiyes, in fact the entire personnel of the Iltizam system, would not dare go near the aroused villages.²³⁶ For the British on the other hand taxes would certainly have to be paid to the state. On August 6, 1878, High Commissioner Wolseley noted in his diary:

I hear complaints from all quarters that the peasants refuse to pay the tax-farmers, so I have been obliged to announce by a printed circular that they must pay as heretofore for this year but that next year I hope to have established a land tax on a different system.²³⁷

However no printed circular could stem popular sentiments which had been boiling for generations, and which forced the British to adopt ways not dissimilar to those of the Turks. The immediate issue was to dispel all illusions that the new power in

235. Ibid.

236. Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "I dekati kai oi Angloi" (The tithe and the English), September 17, 1936.

237. Cavendish, Wolseley, op. cit., p. 40.

the land would tolerate non-payment of taxes. There was no time for the introduction of a new tax system, so state authority would have to be asserted in terms of the existing one. Tchada village in Paphos was a case in point. On August 18, 1878, the people of the village told the Commissioner that they were unable to pay their taxes and reaffirmed their refusal to a party of Turkish policemen. The officer in charge was met by an inflamed mob, and was forced to depart, realizing that an attempt to make arrests would result in bloodshed. In his report to the Chief Secretary, the Commissioner of Paphos noted that troops had thereby been called, in order to proceed to the village:

At any rate the mere fact of British soldiers putting in an appearance will have a soothing effect. I think the people have taken it into their heads that on no account will our soldiers be used to aid the present Turkish officials in the execution of their office. I have already taken particular care to visit as many of the villages all around as possible, and have always made it a point to inform them of the necessity of a prompt payment of the taxes.²³⁸

In the event, the villagers' acquiescence was extracted by a mixed force of Turkish zaptiyes and Ghurkas. "I am sanguine enough" reported the Commissioner, "to believe that the lesson will not be thrown away upon them, nor on the remainder of the peasants in this district".²³⁹ During the summer of 1878 similar reports on peasant defiance from several parts of the island had

238. SA1:1878/Box 1, Captain A. G. Wauchope, Civil Commissioner of Paphos, to Colonel G. R. Greaves, Chief of Staff Headquarters, August 19, 1878.

239. Ibid., Wauchope to Greaves, August 20, 1878.

been met likewise. On August 31 the Chief Secretary, George Greaves, instructed the Assistant Commissioner of Nicosia and the Commissioners of Limassol and Paphos to give tithe-farmers every assistance in their power.²⁴⁰ "This shall be attended to" replied Lieutenant E. L. Braithwaite, Assistant Commissioner of Limassol, "some of the villages are disposed to be very troublesome".²⁴¹ The Paphos Commissioner was equally explicit, stating that he had given every assistance to tithe-farmers in his district, who seemed to be very well satisfied. Referring to the unruly peasants the Commissioner added: "The Tchada village expedition had a soothing effect; it just showed them that taxes must be paid".²⁴² The effect was indeed soothing, but only for a while. The ideology of popular protest and revolt, which had been nursed for generations and surfaced upon the end of Ottoman rule, did not disappear in the face of naked force. Given that oppression and exploitation were to continue, this ideology simply went underground, awaiting to re-emerge in more favourable circumstances.

Having asserted their authority over the mass of rural taxpayers, the British introduced another change: they demanded in full the revenue which had been collected, and owed to the state,

240. Ibid., G. Greaves, Chief Secretary, to Lieutenant Seager, Assistant Commissioner of Nicosia, Falk Warren, Commissioner of Limassol and A. G. Wauchope, Commissioner of Paphos, August 31, 1878.

241. Ibid., Minute by Braithwaite, September 9, 1878.

242. Ibid., Wauchope to Greaves, September 5, 1878.

by the tax-farmers. This was a break with Ottoman practice, whereby these debts would be owed to the Government for so long that they would be written off, and was indicative of British resolve to eliminate privilege regarding an individual's obligations to the state. By the end of the year, the authorities' refusal to continue providing policemen for enforcing payments by the peasants, resulted in several tax-farmers being unable to meet their financial obligations to the Government. Magnates such as Panagiotakis Sariboglou, Costantis Rossides and Hadjianastasis Demetriades, who had rented the taxes for entire districts, were left owing the Government a total of 200,000 piastres (more than £1,100). On February 2, 1880, the three tax-farmers petitioned the Chief Secretary for government assistance to recover arrears due to them.²⁴³ These were influential figures, used to having things their way under the Ottomans. P. Sariboglou in particular was a scion of the most prominent Kocabası family in the island.²⁴⁴

243. SA1:13814, P. K. Sariboglou, C. N. Rossides and H. A. Demetriades to Chief Secretary, February 2, 1880.

244. For the Sariboglou family during Ottoman times see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Oi palioi kai oi neoi" (The old and the new), January 19, 1936. For the influence of C. Rossides see ibid., "Dekatistes - Mukatacides" (Tithe-farmers), September 15, 1936. For the Demetriades family see Coudounaris, Viographikon lexikon Kyprion 1800-1920 (A biographical dictionary of Cyprus), Nicosia 1972, pp. 45-46.

The British however would have none of the practices of the Ottoman period. The Auditor and Accountant General, John O'Neil, who examined the petitioners' case, noted that they would thereafter have to enforce their claims for arrears as ordinary debts by process of law before the Courts.²⁴⁵ On February 14, 1880, Police Commandant A. Gordon, who was at the time serving as Acting Chief Secretary, dealt with another four such petitions in sterner language:

We cannot give zaptiyes, but they must enforce their claims by ordinary process. They should not be told their case is under consideration. The Govt have nothing to do with it and are insisting on their paying up to Govt what they owe.²⁴⁶

Arrears to tax-farmers consisted of hundreds and thousands of small sums from debtors dispersed all over the countryside. Having to send out summonses and bring them up to court meant that these dues would be very difficult to collect by tax-farmers through legal procedures. When, however, these once-powerful figures failed to meet their obligations they were treated, in the spirit of the new law, as equal to any ordinary Cypriot who owed money to the Government. Once an order of execution had been issued on the debts of Sariboglou, Rossides and Demetriades the Auditor and Accountant General instructed the Commissioner of

245. SA1:13814, Minute by John O'Neil, Auditor and Accountant General, February 20, 1880.

246. SA1:13817, Minute by A. Gordon, Acting Chief Secretary, February 14, 1880.

Nicosia: "In default of payment, as arranged on other papers, you will proceed to the seizure of property sufficient to meet the debts detailed herewith".²⁴⁷

The next step taken by the British in their reorganisation of public finances was to make taxes directly payable by the taxpayer to the state. At the same time they tried, according to Hill, to proceed on the general principle that existing taxes should not be increased or new ones imposed.²⁴⁸ The existing mechanism for collecting taxes was kept largely intact. During the harvest of 1879 agents and superintendents, who had worked under tithe-farmers were employed under District Commissioners and the overall supervision of the Auditor and Accountant - General. The British fiscal reform was met with remarkable success. In June 1880 the High Commissioner reported to the Secretary of State on the previous year's collection of revenue:

Having thus briefly analyzed the general heads of revenue I desire to point out to your Lordship one very remarkable fact, viz, that the tithes for last year have been almost entirely collected, only 1.4 per cent. being in arrear. This is a fact almost unprecedented, I believe, in modern Turkish history.²⁴⁹

247. SA1:13819, John O'Neil, Auditor and Accountant General, to Richard Gordon, Commissioner of Nicosia, May 31, 1880.

248. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 443.

249. [C.-2629], Correspondence Respecting the Financial State of the Island of Cyprus, Sir Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Earl Granville, Secretary of State for the Colonies, June 7, 1880, (London, 1880), p. 8.

A comprehensive revenue system covered practically all aspects of production, consumption and exchange. Apart from the tithe, which was the main source of revenue, taxes included the vergi kimat on immovable property, the vergi temettü on trades and professions, the bedel askerî, which was a poll tax, as well as sheep, goat and pig taxes, customs, wharfage dues, excise, licenses and a few others.²⁵⁰ Though the incidence of taxation under the new system became more fairly distributed, the efficiency in tax collection hardly contributed to the popularity of Britain. For lack of reliable accounts during Ottoman rule an exact comparison of the total revenue accruing to the two administrations is not possible. However the English speaking press admitted to a heavier burden of taxes under colonial rule. The Cyprus Herald noted in June 1886:

The taxes may not be nominally higher to-day than what they were in the days of the Turks, but they press more heavily because they have to be paid and the fact that they were not always paid in Turkish times is proved by the amount of arrears which has been collected since the English occupation and which assisted to swell the Revenues so as to give every appearance of increasing prosperity.²⁵¹

No person was better qualified to compare and contrast the tax burdens of the two administrations than Hamilton Lang, who had been nominated as Vice-Consul in Cyprus in 1861 and had also

250. For a detailed description of these taxes see specifically [C.-3661], Papers Relating to the Administration and Finances of Cyprus. E. Fairfield, "Memorandum on the Finances and Administration of Cyprus", June 1882 (London, 1883), pp. 59-75.

251. The Cyprus Herald, "Limassol", June 12, 1886.

become director of the Imperial Ottoman Bank shortly after its foundation in 1864. Lang, who was still serving in both capacities at the time of the British occupation, continued as director of the bank during the early years of colonial rule and in 1890, after his retirement, commented on the issue of taxation in Cyprus:

Any person cognizant of the dealings between the cultivators and the tithe collectors in the time of the Turks is aware that the full tithe was never received...Under the British administration the full pound of flesh is rightly extracted, for, to give every one his due, the British official is always a good publican in the Roman sense of the term.²⁵²

What was more disturbing for the Cypriots was the fact that this increase in public revenue was not matched by a corresponding increase in public expenditure. A large part was used for the upkeep of an expensive colonial bureaucracy. Lang contrasted the annual cost of the Ottoman administration, at 40,000 Turkish lira to the colonial one at 110,000.²⁵³ At the same time, out of an annual revenue which, during the first 20 years of British rule, had averaged £174,000 the sum of £92,000 per year was deducted and diverted to the British Treasury. Though under the terms of the Cyprus Convention this sum was to be sent to the Porte it was in fact used for the payment of the British bond-holders on the

252. Hamilton Lang, "Cyprus after Twelve Years of British Rule", Macmillan's Magazine, November 1890, p. 18.

253. Ibid., p. 20.

Crimean Loan of 1855. By contrast the annual expenditure on education averaged £3,000, on medical services £4,000 and on public works £13,000.²⁵⁴ Such a drain on the island's resources created the so-called Tribute Question. For a whole 50 years this was, next to enosis, the most controversial issue in the politics of the island. It was the constant theme of protest in petitions and memorials, in newspaper editorials and in resolutions of public meetings, all too numerous to mention. Hill has devoted to the Tribute Question an entire chapter, out of eight which make up his account of the British period.²⁵⁵

II. The End of Millet and the Church

The setting aside of the Millet system had undermined the position of the Bishops. The introduction of rational norms in administration and taxation meant that the state had a monopoly of claim on taxes, which would be paid directly by each individual. This policy, coming into direct conflict with the interests of the tax-farmers, had meant the abolition of Iltizam. In the case of the Church, the second major claimant to Revenue within the Ottoman system, the regime of obligatory dues was brought to an end by the colonial government's mere withdrawal from the extraction process. The High Commissioner's refusal to offer police escorts to the Bishops collecting zeteiai and

254. See specifically G. S. Georghallides, A Political and Administrative History of Cyprus 1918-1926, Nicosia, 1979, p. 28.

255. See Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 443-462.

canonica had a predictable result: the population would not pay. On June 29, 1881, Neophytos, Bishop of Paphos, wrote to the District Commissioner of his flock's attitude once they learned to think of their dues as voluntary: "They have ever since ceased regular payment and several villages have not given a piastre, because their inhabitants do not wish to do so, and some others only paid one quarter of these dues..."²⁵⁶

Deprived of state support the clergy had no recourse except appeal to their moral authority. Attempts were made here and there to deny spiritual consolation to the people and a number of churches were shut.²⁵⁷ This policy however was soon given up as being worse than useless, given that the liturgica, fees for births, weddings and funerals, as well as donations on feast days, could only be obtained if the chapels were open. At the same time the clergy's persistent demands for police support in their collections, only annoyed the High Commissioner, Sir Garnet Wolseley. On November 27, 1878 Wolseley made the following entry in his diary, about the Archbishop: "A yellow-faced debilitated man. He is always worrying me to help him to collect his tithes which a refractory people don't seem inclined to pay up".²⁵⁸

256. SA1:6097, Neophytos, Bishop of Paphos, to Arthur Young, Commissioner of Paphos, June 29, 1881.

257. Cavendish, Wolseley, op. cit., p. 89. On the same subject see [C.-2324], Correspondence Respecting Complaints Made Against the Government of Cyprus, "Sir G. Wolseley to the Marquis of Salisbury", April 10, 1879, (London, 1879), p. 6.

258. Cavendish, Wolseley, op. cit., p. 151.

Sophronios' request was also turned down by the next High Commissioner, Sir Robert Biddulph, who seemed to share his predecessor's dislike for the Greek clergy. In a despatch to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Biddulph noted with dismay that the Archbishop had referred to his flock as an ignorant people, who had never been accustomed to paying anything except when compelled to do so.²⁵⁹

The degree of pressure which had, during Ottoman times, been exerted upon the populace for the extraction of these dues, can be gauged by the fact that during British rule the Church's income diminished by more than two thirds.²⁶⁰ What is more, the Church was now burdened with property taxes; the rational British economic mind refused to acknowledge the distinction between property which did and which did not contribute to state revenue. Sultanic charters, granting Church lands exemption from vergi taxes, were as a rule ignored. In December 1878 Captain A. G. Wauchope, Commissioner of Paphos, reported on the imposition of vergi tax upon the district's monasteries: "The Bishop here tries to make out that by some fermans of ancient date they are exempt.

259. Foreign Office, Confidential, (4319), Part II, Correspondence Relating to the Island of Cyprus, June to December 1879, Sir Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, September 1, 1879, (London, 1880), p. 133.

260. The figure is mentioned in a letter of Archbishop Sophronios dated 6th-18th December, 1894, and cited in Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 264.

But of fermans I am ignorant and at present am trying to collect from the convents as per margin". The taxes described in the margin of the despatch amounted to 12,226 piastres.²⁶¹ The monasteries would be strained to pay this sum even if they wanted to.

Yet perhaps more important was the symbolic challenge to the Bishops' position as patrons of a traditionally secure elite. On November 9, 1878, the most spirited of the Bishops, Kyprianos of Kitium, protested to Falk Warren, Commissioner of Limassol, against "the arbitrary demand of the ruling administration to place on an equal footing private immovable property with the property of the Church, which was governed by Sultanic berats".²⁶² A week later the Bishop launched a further appeal, this time to the High Commissioner, asking him to take into consideration the gravity of this affair, which was "very closely connected to the entire hitherto existing social system of our communities".²⁶³ Wolseley failed to be moved against the conduct of his Commissioners, who were carrying out official policy. In order to remove all doubts on the position Charles Cookson, Legal Adviser to the Government, pronounced on the cases in which the senior clergy failed to pay:

261. SA1:1878/Box 3, A. G. Wauchope, Civil Commissioner of Paphos, to George Greaves, Chief Secretary, December 1, 1878.

262. SA:1878/Box 2, Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium, to Falk Warren, Commissioner of Limassol, November 9, 1878.

263. Ibid., Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium, to Sir Garnet Wolseley, High Commissioner, November 14, 1878.

Where there is a representative of the Religious Body, he should be summoned to attend before the Council and if he comes and will not pay sequester should be put upon the rent and produce of the land. If the representative does not attend he should be fined for non-attendance, and if the fine is not paid arrested and kept in prison till he pays.

If there is no representative appointed by the Body, the Bishop, Abbot, or other person who receives the produce, should be treated like any other defaulter in the above manner.²⁶⁴

Closely related to taxation, the Church's landed property also became an issue from the outset of the occupation. The British would not accept the claims to ab antiquo property ownership of several Prelates.²⁶⁵ This question was not definitively settled until the completion of the General Survey of Properties in 1929, 50 years after the occupation. In the meantime, enormous tracts of pasture and forest land were disputed, and effectively lost to the Church. What is more, setting members of the clergy on parity with ordinary inhabitants was not limited to property issues but encompassed all aspects of relations between the individual and the state. Hitherto priests accused of having committed common law offences were not prosecuted in the courts but were tried by the Archbishop and punished with confinement within the precincts of the bishopric, or even a monastery. The temper

264. SA1:1878/Box 3, C. A. Cookson, Legal Adviser, to George Greaves, Chief Secretary, December 10, 1878.

265. On this issue see Nicos Christodoulou, "I periousia tis Ekklesias tis Kyprou sta prota khronia tis Anglokratias" (The property of the Church of Cyprus during the early years of British rule), Epetiris Kentrou Meleton Ieras Monis Kykkou (Annual Review of the Research Centre of the Holy Monastery of Kykko), Vol. 2, Nicosia, 1973.

of British policy toward the clergy was manifested in March 1879, when two priests who had violated forest regulations were brought to trial, shaved and convicted to forced labour in public. This was scandalous not only for the clergy but also for the Greek community at large. In Larnaca a crowd was reported to have staged a protest outside the house of Claude D. Cobham, District Commissioner.²⁶⁶

Indeed, the Government's efforts to humble the Church of Cyprus could hardly inspire the mass of the Greeks with feelings of affection for the foreign power which had taken over their island. Heavy taxation was another major factor which alienated the Cypriots from their new rulers. Within a much more liberal environment, a population whose aspirations were now higher would be more prone to protest against tax exactions. This was more so because the new administration was still alien rule imposed on a subject population. The British community, made up of administrative and military officials and their families, was soaked in colonial prejudice. Their attitude, reflected in the Cyprus Herald, the only English language newspaper in the island, alienated the Greek community. An article agreed with Turkish

266. Kyriazis, Koinoniki drasis, op. cit., p. 55.

The attitude of T. Constantinides, editor of Neon Kition, seems to demonstrate the public's view on the affair. Though Constantinides was, at the time, the most vocal exponent of the idea that the clergy should refrain from participation in politics, the entire space in the first issue of the paper was taken up by condemnation of British highhandedness (Neon Kition, "To skandalon tis kouras ton iereon" (The scandal of cutting the hair of the priests) April 4, 1879).

protests against Greek demands for an elected Legislative Council: "We do not think that the natives of Cyprus are ripe for an innovation of so extensive a nature".²⁶⁷ The paper also commented on Greek grievances for greater participation in the administration of the island: "When they are educated and Europeanised they can expect posts in Government".²⁶⁸

With sentiments like these it was hardly to be expected that the British would make themselves popular; in fact breaking away from the Ottoman tradition of formal respect for Christian Orthodoxy made them at times outrightly detested. During Good Friday, 1885, the epitaph procession through the streets of Limassol was grossly insulted by the British, from the balcony of the English Club, causing a riot in the town and a wave of anti-British feeling across the island. The High Commissioner wrote a sensible letter to the Archbishop, expressing his sorrow at the incident, which he blamed on liquor. One week later however a comment in the Cyprus Herald only served to demonstrate that such attitudes were held deeply in the island's English circles:

I would ask those members of the Greek Community to remember that they form but a portion of the population, and many of other religious denominations consider what they describe as "Christ's funeral" as an insult to their religious feelings, downright buffoonery and a profanation of sacred things, whilst others declare it to be rank idolatry...One would think the churches are large enough for those who wish to use them and where no heterodox will trouble them.²⁶⁹

267. The Cyprus Herald, "The New Legislative Council", April 5, 1881.

268. Ibid., November 11, 1881.

269. Ibid., "Correspondence", April 8, 1885.

Such were the circumstances of the shift in the Church's stand toward the state. Far from the clergy having by their nationalism aroused British suspicions, the colonial power had in practice cornered the Church into questioning the edicts of secular authority. Now that their guaranteed supremacy in the Ottoman state had gone the clergy had to adjust to the new situation of voluntary contributions and lay and popularly elected representatives. This naturally entailed heeding to their flock's outlook; a force which would not stand for some sort of anti-government politics was bound to suffer in terms of popularity and influence. Kyprianos of Kitium, the Bishop who had declared his perpetual loyalty to the Turkish Governor, and whose address to Wolseley had infuriated Cairo Cypriots, now became the leading figure of nationalist opposition.²⁷⁰

At the same time the clergy never lost hope of regaining their traditional favour with the ruling regime in the island. Humiliations suffered would be forgotten and the alien power would once more be propped up, if only a semblance of the Ottoman state's support were to be granted by the British, if only the police would once again squeeze the clergy's dues out of the unruly populace. As late as 1888 the Church appealed for such a concordat. In a memorandum to the Queen's Advocate, Archbishop

^{270.} According to Hill the Bishop was to be a thorn in the flesh of the Government (Hill, History, op. cit., p. 421).

Sophronios set out a number of demands regarding the Church's civil, financial and judicial affairs. The most important of these demands was set first in the memorandum:

(I) It is the duty of the Church, by means of her spiritual resource, to support the Civil Authority in the carrying out of all its just and lawful orders. On the other hand the Civil Power, by means of its material resources, must support and assist the Ecclesiastical Power in all its reasonable and just demands.²⁷¹

The Queen's Advocate, W. R. Collyer, in a detailed report on the Archbishop's memorandum, commented accordingly on the demand for mutual support between Church and State:

This is unquestionably the old understanding between the Sultan and the Orthodox Church.

With us it means little or nothing; for the material assistance must always be in accordance with the law.

For this the Church would consider it owed no thanks; as it would receive no favour.²⁷²

Despite very considerable financial losses the Church was still immensely wealthy, owning the most extensive tracts of landed property in the island. What is more, the ethnarchic tradition, the clergy's control of the education system and the strength of religious sentiment amongst the population made the Bishops natural rallying points against the abuses of colonial

271. CO 67/61, "Translation of a Memorandum handed to the Queen's Advocate by the Archbishop of Cyprus in 1888". Enclosure I in "Confidential", Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 1, 1889.

272. Ibid., "Minute by the Queen's Advocate on the above memorandum", August 21, 1888. Enclosure II in Bulwer to Knutsford, July 1, 1889.

rule. On July 1, 1889 the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Bulwer, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Knutsford, on the Church of Cyprus:

There is still a certain popular regard for it as the ark in which the national language, the national sentiments and the national individuality of the Greek speaking population have found their best refuge and protection through centuries of foreign dominion and it is this recollection and this association which will probably be its best security against attack in the future, because to attack it would be to run the risk of offending a popular sentiment.²⁷³

III. Ethnic and Social Relations under British Rule

The elimination of the Millet system had produced a different balance sheet for each of the social groups and creeds in the island. The Turks, having lost their dominant status, had to surrender most of their autonomy to the colonial administration, in order to safeguard a somewhat preferential treatment as a community.²⁷⁴ The Greek clergy were still influential, though having suffered a diminution in income and political power. The mass of the Greek labouring poor, having benefited from their new-found equality of rights, were arguably being more heavily taxed. The greatest benefits accrued to the lay members of the moneyed establishment, who were predominantly Greek. The tax-farmers of the Ottoman years had all along also been engaging in commerce, and had accumulated wealth in great gobbets; losses from

273. Ibid., Bulwer to Knutsford, July 7, 1891.

274. See generally Georghallides, A Political, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

the abolition of Iltizam were more than made up by the expansion of trade and money-lending, and the overall growth of the economy. Between the two years ending 31st December 1878 and 31st December 1879 the total value of trade (imports plus exports), increased from £334,979 (177,651 + 157,328) to £530,625 (308,407 + 222,218),²⁷⁵ an increase of 58.4%.

These earlier capitalists did not invest in industrial production; profits could more easily be made out of subcontracting for the needs of the army and colonial officialdom and the carrying out of the public work schemes initiated by the British. Great financial interests also required, as in Ottoman times, good relations with the authorities and access to the state. For a while the factions of the Greek establishment joined ranks, and demonstrated their loyalty to the new power in the land. They were keen to exploit the opportunity and expand their influence in the face of the Turks, who were now fighting a rearguard action in defence of what rights they could preserve from the old Ottoman order. In January 1879, Greek school children, who were a few months earlier being instructed to cheer for the Turkish Paşa, now chanted in tune a Greek version of the English Anthem:

Τη Βασιλίδα μας Σεπτὴν Βικτώριαν σώσον Θεέ!
Δος δόξης στέφανον, την τύχην άφθονον,
Την Βασιλίδα μας σώσον Θεέ!
Τα καλά άπαντα Κύπρου Προστάτιδι δος, ώ Θεέ.²⁷⁶

275. See the table by W. Corby, Chief Collector of Customs, January 28, 1880 in Annual Report, 1879, op. cit., p. 298.

276. Cyprus, "Dheisis adomeni en to Parthenagogio Lefkosias yper tis Vasilissis tis Megalis Vrettanias" (A hymn sung in the Girls' School of Nicosia for the Queen of Great Britain), January 12/24, 1879.

The Greeks of Nicosia in particular achieved an effective unity of purpose through the amalgamation, on May 21, 1879, of the capital's four major clubs, Solon, Zenon, Omonoia and Elpis into one, under the name Kypriakos Syllogos.²⁷⁷ Though article one of the constitution declared the new club's aim as the cultivation and promotion of letters,²⁷⁸ Kypriakos Syllogos was in fact to be more of a loose organisation of Nicosia's notables than a literary association. The elitist nature of the membership was secured by the prohibitively high level of subscription, at 12s a year, at a time when daily wages for skilled labour averaged out to 1s a day. The very conservative stance of Nicosia's upper classes was also reflected in the club's constitution. According to article 42:

Any person who is to deliver a public lecture in the association must inform the committee in advance on the subject of the lecture. What is more, the subject must not in any way deal with religious, moral or political issues.²⁷⁹

The exclusion of political issues was in effect the exclusion of nationalist and anti-colonial issues. The Greek establishment, spiritual and temporal, having grown in the shelter of the ruling Ottomans, had no tradition which would set them on a course of

277. See the text of the lecture delivered on the club's 25th anniversary in the Nicosia newspaper Kyprios, "I historiki dialexis tou k. E. Constantinidou" (The historic lecture by Mr. E. Constantinides), June 10, 1901.

278. Kanonismos tou en Lefkosia Kyprou "Kypriakou Syllogou" (Constitution of Kypriakos Syllogos in Nicosia, Cyprus), Smyrna, 1879, p. 3.

279. Ibid., p. 11.

opposition to, let alone collision with, the new power in the land. To the extent that nationalism was put forward it was of a particularly mild disposition, in line with the concept of Greece being something of a scout for British interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the Egyptian revolt of 1882 the British intervention, assisted as it was by the Greek navy, was strongly supported by the Greek press and the Greek elite in Cyprus, including the nationalists, who might be expected to be more sympathetic toward the insurgents.²⁸⁰

In the tradition of the Yeşil Cazino links between Cypriots and British extended to social intercourse, and were as close as the latter would allow. Such contacts, which began from the early days of the occupation, were only granted to the most prominent of Cypriots, who valued them greatly. The press ran several reports on such functions. On February 12, 1887 Enosis gave a long account of the dance organised in Larnaca by the English and Greek youth of high standing [ευύπολήπτων], under the aegis of the Commissioner for the benefit of those who had come to attend the horse races.²⁸¹ Though during the 1890s nationalist sentiment was steadily advancing, close relations between rulers and ruled were not presented as unbecoming, amongst the upper classes at least. The Greek Consul with his regular attendance, legitimised

280. See the article "Vomvardismos Alexandrias" (The bombardment of Alexandria) in Stasinós, July 10, 1883.

281. Enosis, "O khoros tis neolaias Larnakos" (The ball of Larnaca's youth), February 12/24, 1887.

these functions, and Greco-British cooperation. This variant of patriotism was exhibited during social events, such as a ball in Larnaca, in February 1895, organised by certain respectable families. It was attended by the local British officials, the Director of the Greek Gymnasium in Nicosia, and several

distinguished citizens [έγκριτοι πολίται] with their families, the noble youth [ευγενής νεολαία] of our town and certain youths, also noble [επίσης ευγενείς], who had come from Nicosia...The Consul of Greece Mr. Philemon, who sat at the head of the table, raised a toast for Queen Victoria, which was answered by the hurrahs of those present and the orchestra, as if having been given the signal, played the English anthem. Mr. E. Hore, Director of Mail Services, raised in English a toast for the King of Greece, the sounds of hurrah filled the room and general enthusiasm was raised by the hymn "Drawn from the sacred bones of the Greeks"*.²⁸²

And they all danced and enjoyed themselves, with undiminished^d gaiety, vivaciousness and enjoyment, without the least^d misunderstanding until five in the morning...²⁸³

This was a consistent policy by the Greek Consulate, and the Greek Foreign Ministry. Antagonism with Greece's Slav and Turkish neighbours strengthened the Kingdom's traditional loyalty to the British connection. On April 29, 1892, shortly after the end of his tenure in Cyprus, Sir Henry Bulwer sent to the Secretary of State a long note on the evolution of the Greek national movement and the role of Greece's accredited representatives in Cyprus:

The Greek Consuls have always behaved to the best of my knowledge, in a loyal manner to the Government of the island, and at any rate they have abstained from associating themselves in any inconvenient or unseemly

282. * The Greek national anthem.

283. Enosis, "O en Larnaki khoros" (The ball in Larnaca), February 8/20, 1895.

way with the so-called "patriotic" party. With the exception of some thoughtless proceedings on the part of the Greek Vice-Consul at Limassol in 1886 or 1887, which were reported to me at the time, the Greek Consuls and consular agents in Cyprus have never given any trouble or any course of complaint to the Government of the Island during the whole time I was in Cyprus and it is only due to them and to the Government of Athens that I should say this.²⁸⁴

Unlike the clergy therefore, the lay notables of the Greek establishment were not hesitant about their conduct toward the British. Apart from the obvious financial benefits they also contested for the new spoils which became available with the British occupation: posts in the fields of administration and politics. In governing the island, the British had confined themselves to an overall supervisory role and rarely came into contact with the population. This was not only a consequence of colonial prejudice but was also dictated by the fact that the small number of British officials, around 60, could only man the top jobs; in the remote district of Paphos there were only four resident British officials. The fact that the middle and low ranks in the colonial administration were left to Cypriots, and that the end of the Millet system also put an end to the virtual Turkish monopoly in Government, left very considerable scope for the participation of Greeks. Within two years of the occupation, out of a total of 363 officials of both ethnic communities in public service, 125 (34%) were Greeks.²⁸⁵

284. CO 67/78, Sir Henry Bulwer, Beirut, to Viscount Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 29, 1892.

285. [C.-2699], Return of all Officials Higher and Subordinate in the Public Service in Cyprus. Enclosure. Prepared by Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, July 23, 1880, (London, 1880).

At the same time the British would not enrol Greeks in government in anything approaching their population proportions, despite the fact that they were in general better educated. By the end of the century, out of 472 Cypriots the Greeks, who were 80% of the population, occupied 237 posts (50%). The Turks, who were demonstrably more loyal, though only 20% of the population had 198 posts (42%). Preference for minority communities was more pronounced in the case of the Armenians and Maronites who, comprising 2% of the population, were allocated 37 posts (8%).²⁸⁶ These disparities were even more marked in the police force, which was part of, though in some ways separate from, the bureaucracy. As late as 1919, out of 763 men in the force, 420 (55%) were Turks.²⁸⁷

However, during the early years of colonial rule, the Greeks did not make an issue of this measure of discrimination against them. The sons of merchants and landowners, the ones that is having access to the posts thrown open to the Greeks, were content to occupy them. Their participation did not alter in any way the functioning of the police and administrative institutions. The Greek social establishment was thus joined by a slowly evolving stratum of Greek employees in the administration and the police. As in Ottoman times, the now bicomunal bureaucracy continued to provide the ruling power with all the assistance

286. See the list of government officials in the Cyprus Blue Book 1900-1901, (Nicosia, 1902), pp. 109-133.

287. Hill, History, op. cit., p. 531.

without which the running of the province/colony would not have been possible. Implementation of policy was devolved to the administrative mechanism, headed by the regional sub-commissioners or Müdirs. In 1889 the High Commissioner's comments highlighted the dependence of British officials on the loyalty and co-operation of Cypriots in the administration:

(The Müdirs) are, for one thing, revenue officers...Some of them also are regarded as the head of their police in their respective nahiehs. They report crimes; they inquire into them; they investigate them. They also serve to some extent as sub-sheriffs. They are agents of the Government for issuing government notices, regulations, orders, &c., and, I presume, for taking care that these are duly observed. They superintend the sales of land and help the district land registry offices in other ways. They furnish information about lands, roads, forests, &c. They make local inquiry for the Commissioners into the subject of petitions and complaints, and they are employed in procuring information of all kinds for the Commissioner.²⁸⁸

Instances where the influence of Cypriots in positions of authority was weakened were in fact a cause of concern for the British. This held particularly true for village commissions and Muhtars, who represented central authority in the community. Their duties ranged from keeping peace and order within the muh-tarlik and conducting sales of immovable property to issuing certificates and assisting tax-collectors in their duties.²⁸⁹ The abolition of Iltizam and the allocation of tax-collection to

288. [C.-5812], Further Correspondence Relating to the Affairs and Finances of Cyprus, Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, February 5, 1889, (London, 1889), p. 41.

289. The Mukhtar's Handbook, Nicosia, 1913, pp. 5-7.

Government agents had ended the direct involvement of Muhtars and village commissions in taxation. This had diminished their influence and had also deprived them of monetary fees. The political implications of this development, which were not foreseen at the time, were accounted for much later, in 1893, by the Queen's Advocate, A. F. G. Law:

In practice, from the moment the Muhtars ceased to be paid, the best men in the villages ceased to desire to have the post and those who were appointed Muhtars took little or no trouble about the performance of their duties with the result that there ceased to be any one to keep order in the villages.²⁹⁰

District Commissioners were keen to maintain in village commissions as many as possible of the perennial merchant money-lenders, who also owned the local coffee-house and village-store. This objective was demonstrated when in 1886 the Government drafted legislation to include coffee-house keepers amongst those disqualified from serving as Muhtars, given that they should, as licensed sellers of spirits, be subject to supervision.²⁹¹ The Bill was blocked by the District Commissioners. The Commissioner of Kyrenia noted that the best Muhtar he ever had was a coffee-house keeper.²⁹² The Commissioner of Nicosia was more explicit. In villages, particularly small ones, the coffee-house keeper was

290. SA1:1277/1893, A. F. G. Law, Queen's Advocate, to Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, September 2, 1893.

291. SA1:4941/1885, "Confidential", Chief Secretary to all Commissioners, January 23, 1886.

292. Ibid., "Confidential", Report by Edward Kenyon, Commissioner of Kyrenia, February 5, 1886.

often the most intelligent man and the only one able to read and write. Obviously referring to the coffee-house keeper's ownership of premises and trading activities, the Commissioner added that his position peculiarly qualified him for the fulfilment of the duties required of a Muhtar.²⁹³

In 1891, in the wake of the great economic crisis and the manifestation of widespread discontent, the Government and Legislative Council strengthened the institution of Muhtar as an instrument of order. Elections were abolished; Law XV of 1891 was an attempt to ensure that the post would thereafter be occupied by persons who were reliable by virtue of their social background and their nomination by the authorities. According to the law the District Commissioner with the Meclis Idare would select annually four persons from each village or quarter and submit them to the High Commissioner, who would in turn appoint one of them as Muhtar. "These persons are selected", wrote the High Commissioner to the Secretary of State, "for their intelligence and for the respect and repute in which they are held in their villages".²⁹⁴

During British rule, the Muhtars and village commissions were the most important links between the Government and the mass of the population. Though the Meclis Idare of the Ottoman period were also maintained, their most important functions, in the

293. Ibid., "Confidential", Report by Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, February 2, 1886.

294. CO 67/90, Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Marquis of Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, February 9, 1895.

field of finance, came to an end with the abolition of the farming out of the tithes. Their duties were now limited to matters such as fixing wine prices, auditing municipal accounts and issuing warrants for the seizure and sale of goods for unpaid taxes.²⁹⁵ Though these were useful services, membership in these circumscribed councils was not, under colonial rule, viewed as particularly prestigious.

The situation was more complicated regarding municipal authorities; these were either Commissions, appointed by the Government, or Councils, elected by the population. The latter were preferable to the Greeks, who enjoyed a majority of the councillors, and could in turn elect the president of the Municipal Council. The Turks, on the other hand, preferred Commissions, consisting of one member from each community and a usually British president, answerable to the Government. In the municipalities of Paphos and Nicosia the Turks, who formed a sizeable proportion of the population, utilised the provision in the law according to which an elected council ceased to exist if one third of its members resigned. For several years, the resignation of Turkish councillors forced the abolition of Councils

295. See specifically [C.-6003], Further Correspondence Relating to the Affairs and Finances of Cyprus, Report by the Queen's Advocate, W. R. Collyer, "The History, Constitution, Privileges and Powers of the Central and Local Meclis Idare", Nicosia, June 4, 1888, (London, 1890), pp. 3-8.

and the appointment of Commissions.²⁹⁶ The rising proportion of Greeks in the population of these towns eventually put an end to this situation.

IV. Social and Regional Dimensions of Electoral Politics

The diminished significance of the Meclis Idare and the difficulties in the functioning of Municipal Councils left membership of the Legislative Council as the most influential and prestigious post to which Cypriots could aspire. On November 30, 1882 the most important of colonial administrative reforms was instituted by Order in Council, which turned the Legislative Council into a partly-elected body. The measure did not make it a parliamentary legislature, given that the domain of subjects with which the Council could deal remained deliberately restricted. The Council's representative nature was also seriously circumscribed. Though Greeks were allocated nine seats against the Turks' three, their majority was negated by the presence in the Council of six British official members, enjoying the reliable support of the Turks. The casting vote of the President, who was as a rule the High Commissioner or an officer administering the Government, set the Greeks in a permanent status of opposition.

296. The Municipal Council elected in Nicosia in February 1889, did not hold a single session. The Turks resigned two days after the election and the Council had to be replaced by a nominated Commission (Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), March 4/16, 1888).

In the unlikely event of an intercommunal coalition the decisions of the Council could be overcome from London, by Order in Council.²⁹⁷

Compared to the Ottoman system, where the say of the Greeks was limited to local administrative affairs, the Legislative Council was a significant advance, at least for those who could involve themselves in electoral politics. The vast majority of the population however were relegated to a totally subordinate role in the electoral process. Though in Britain, toward the close of the 19th century, the labouring poor would not contemplate being elected in law-making bodies, in Cyprus, partly by design and partly by circumstance, people of this station were to be denied even the opportunity of voting. The basic aspects of the constitution of the Legislative Council were drafted by Elliot Bovill, Judicial Commissioner in Cyprus and William Collyer, Queen's Advocate, who acted as Legal Advisers on the preparation of a system of representation by election. The Advisers suggested conferring the franchise on all males over the age of 21 who paid either vergi tax on immovable property, or rent on a house or shop. The advantage of this system would be the ease of preparing the lists of vergi payers; those paying rent could also be ascertained from the books of the municipalities.²⁹⁸ Over the

297. The standard criticisms of the Legislative Council are acknowledged by both British and Cypriot authors. See for instance Hill, History, op. cit., pp. 418-419 and Georghallides, A Political, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

298. CO 67/21, "Confidential", Legal Advisers to High Commissioner, December 24, 1881. Enclosure in "Confidential", Sir

same period, in the Colonial Office, the stirrings of nationalist agitation in the towns had alerted officials such as Edward Fairfield, Clerk to the African and Mediterranean Department, to the advantages of an electorate of smallholders,

that is all who have any land or any house. We have no better friends in the island than the very humblest class of villagers, as they it was who most felt the weight of Turkish oppression and who have most benefited by our coming.²⁹⁹

Fairfield's considerations were shared by the Secretary of State, who wrote to the High Commissioner on March 10, 1882 suggesting the inclusion in the electorate of all payers of vergi.³⁰⁰ This was prima facie a liberal proposal. In Britain itself farm labourers and miners were still omitted from the registers, the latter on the ground that they did not pay rent for their cottages. In Cyprus however, the fact that lists of voters were to be practically identical to lists of vergi payers led Bovill and Collyer to qualify their definition of a voter in one crucial respect:

The production of the receipt of payment of vergi of the required amount should, in our opinion, entitle a holder to be put on the list of voters; and no person who had failed to pay his vergi to that extent in the

Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Earl Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 24, 1881.

299. Ibid., Note by E. Fairfield, January 31, 1882.

300. [C.-3384], Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Cyprus, Earl of Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Sir R. Biddulph, High Commissioner, March 10, 1882, (London, 1882), p. 75.

year preceding the preparation of the voters' lists should be entitled to have his name entered on the list.³⁰¹

In a society where indebtedness was becoming a chronic malaise this condition was tantamount to political rights being denied not only to pauperised labourers but also to the less competitive of petty traders and smallholders. Nevertheless the Colonial Office was amenable to such suggestions, owing to the anxiety of senior officials that Cypriots should be punctual in paying their taxes. The Tribute weighed heavily upon the taking of decisions on all fields of public administration, despite the damage caused to the Government's image amongst the mass of the population. The recommendations of the Legal Advisers were eventually embodied in the Order in Council of November 30, 1882, which established the constitution of the Legislative Council.³⁰² Edward Fairfield was a lone voice in a consensus accepting financial issues as paramount:

There is no fine for not paying the vergi before the 31st December as there was on not paying the Tithe, and the result was that almost all the vergi payers defer paying up, at all events in full, as of course they are all very hard up, and avoid as much as possible going to the money-lenders, who are as grasping as those in Egypt.³⁰³

301. CO 67/21, Legal Advisers, op. cit.

302. See Article XII of the Order in [C.-3791], Papers Relating to the Constitution of a New Legislative Council. Enclosure 1 of November 30, 1882 in Kimberley to Biddulph, December 16, 1882, (London, 1883), p. 3.

303. CO 67/27, Minute by Fairfield, January 12, 1883.

Edward Wingfield, Assistant Under-Secretary in the Colonial Office, minuted in reply to Fairfield: "The condition of actual payment of taxes as a qualification for a vote seems a very reasonable one".³⁰⁴ Reality however seemed to justify Fairfield's anxieties. In 1882 there was a total of 58,916 male payers of vergi;³⁰⁵ this was a large number for an island with Cyprus' population and was the result of the fact that most Cypriots owned some immovable property. However only 21,703 were registered as voters for the first general election of June 1883,³⁰⁶ a mere 35.8%. What is more, though the population was steadily increasing, the number of registered electors was going down; by the second general election, in 1886, it had further diminished to 18,886, a decrease of more than 10%. The heaviest toll on the Cypriots' capacity to pay their taxes, and thereby exercise their political rights, was taken by the severe economic crisis of 1887-1888. In the third general election, in 1891, the number of registered voters fell to an unprecedented 12,232,³⁰⁷ a decrease of 35% in comparison with the 1886 figure and of 44% with that of

304. Ibid., Minute by Wingfield, January 13, 1883.

305. [C.-3384], op. cit., "Return Respecting Persons Paying Vergi", Enclosure in Biddulph to Kimberley, December 24, 1881, p. 37.

306. [C.-3791], op. cit., "Return respecting the Elections in the Legislative Council, 1883", by Falk Warren, Colonel, Chief Secretary, August 15, 1883, p. 21.

307. For the figures regarding parliamentary elections in 1883, 1886 and 1891 see CO 67/73, enclosure in despatch of Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Viscount Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, January 24, 1892.

1883. This trend raised questions in the Colonial Office, which had been making enquiries regarding the extent to which the franchise was being used. In an explanatory note E. Fairfield, who had been proven abundantly right, replied: "It is due to the tax payers falling into arrears during the famine years and years which followed & being struck off".³⁰⁸

The democratic pretensions of the system were further qualified by the very limited financial resources allocated by the administration for the conduct of the elections. The island's 660 town quarters and villages were formed into groups served by a mere 22 polling stations. The smallest of these groups, served by the polling station at Dali, numbered no less than 13 villages. Other groups were far larger. The polling station in the town of Limassol served, apart from the town's quarters, another 56 villages. The situation was similar at Pera with 49 villages, Lefkoniko (45) and Morphou (40). Lefka was the sole polling station for the valleys of Marathasa and Solea as well as the remote region of Tylliria, with a total of 65 villages.³⁰⁹ This meant that the majority of rural voters would have to travel considerable distances, sometimes over intractable territory, in order to exercise their voting rights. Such difficulties bore more heavily on the lower classes. Craftsmen and agricultural producers on their way to trading fairs might spend weeks away

308. Ibid., Minute by Fairfield, February 2, 1892.

309. For the list of polling stations see The Cyprus Gazette, May 25, 1883.

from their homes and polling stations. Smallholders looking for seasonal employment and masons undertaking contracts in other districts were effectively disenfranchised for longer periods.³¹⁰

Those Cypriots who paid their taxes and covered the required distance in order to arrive at their polling station were confronted with an additional obstacle to their free choice of candidate: balloting was open. The Legal Advisers had pointed out that, owing to the large proportion of people who were unable to read, voting by ballot could not be applied. According to the working of the system proposed, and eventually adopted, there would be present in the polling station the presiding officer, one clerk, one interpreter, a number of Muhtars for the purpose of identifying the voter and an agent whom each candidate might think fit to appoint. After being allowed into the polling station the voter would declare the candidates for whom he desired to vote.³¹¹ Ordinary voters, particularly those who had mortgaged their property, could thus be exposed to all sorts of pressures by influential notables who were standing for election, or supported another candidate. This was very much in accordance with

310. According to Dr. Kyrris, masons left the village of Lapithos in search of work after Easter and returned home at Christmas (C. Kyrris, "Pende epangelmata sti Lapitho tou telous tou XIX [IΘ'] kai ton arkhon tou XX [IK'] aiona" (Five trades in Lapithos toward the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century), Khronika tis Lapithou (Chronicles of Lapithos), Vol. II-III, 1972-1974, Nicosia, p. 85).

311. For a detailed reference to the mode of election see The Cyprus Gazette, "A Proclamation by the High Commissioner", March 31, 1883.

the norms of the Ottoman period, reserving public offices for members of the ruling class, to the extent that there was no reason to camouflage the political inequality entailed by this notion. On the eve of the first election a debate ensued in the press regarding the ability of members of the Council coming from the provinces to attend regularly the deliberations in Nicosia. A letter in Alithia, signed by "Eis daskalos eparkhiakos" (A provincial teacher), referred incidentally to the professions which would naturally be practised by the members of the Council:

Even if in the beginning they agree to take up their posts they will not be able to confer on a regular basis; for instance, today Petros from Limassol will have to load his ship with wine and will not attend the meeting, tomorrow Pavlos from Larnaca will load his wheat and will not be in Nicosia and the day after, this doctor or that lawyer will be bound up with an important and profitable case in Larnaca or in Famagusta, etc...³¹²

In these circumstances it was only natural that the first elections would propel to membership of the Legislative Council those Greeks who, from the closing years of Ottoman rule, were themselves merchant money-lenders or enjoyed their support. In the Nicosia-Kyrenia constituency the greatest number of votes (2,337) were cast for Michael Shakallis, the wealthiest cereal merchant in the island, who had also been the major tax-farmer during the closing years of Ottoman rule.³¹³ He was followed by

312. Alithia, May 14, 1883.

313. For the economic status of Shakallis see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "I palia Lefkosia - Oi palioi emboroi" (Old Nicosia - The old merchants), August 1, 1936. For the results of the 1883 election see SA1:6333, "List of votes cast for each candidate in the elections for the Legislative Council, 1883".

Paschalis Constantinides (2,013), money-lender and advocate. Constantinides had been closely related to the class of tax-farmers during the closing years of the Ottoman period and was, in 1879-1880, their counsellor in litigation against the colonial authorities.³¹⁴ His brother, Efstathios Constantinides, was the third member for the constituency.³¹⁵ Bishop Kyprianos of Kitium headed the poll (2,108) in Larnaca-Famagusta and was followed by Zeno Pierides (2,018), one of the great merchants and shipping agents in the town of Larnaca.³¹⁶ The third member was Theodoros Peristianis (1,392), partner in P. Constantinides' legal office and a close associate of Archbishop Sophronios.³¹⁷ In the third constituency, Limassol-Paphos, two wealthy merchants were elected, George Malikides (2,879) and Dimitrios Nicolaides (2,773).³¹⁸ The third member, elected in a supplementary election, was Demosthenis Hadjipavlou (1,172), the greatest of Limassol's wine merchants.³¹⁹

 314. For these lawsuits see Neos Kypriakos Phylax, "Dekaties kai dekatistes" (The tithe and tithe-farmers), September 19, 1936.

315. For E. Constantinides see generally Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., p. 110.

316. For the social position of Z. Pierides see ibid., pp. 200-201.

317. Ibid., pp. 190-191.

318. On the financial position of G. Malikides and D. Nicolaides see Neon Kition, "I proti en Kypro psifoforia" (The first ballot in Cyprus), June 4, 1883.

319. See his obituary in Alithia, May 15, 1915.

The establishment classes dominated the Legislative Council. The mass of the labouring population, in town and especially in country, having in the jacquerie of August 1878 demonstrated their inherent political views, did not seem to care much about elections. Very low levels of electoral participation were inevitable when politics were not a matter of choice between policies but of choices between persons, all of whom were members of the same merchant money-lending class or of the senior clergy. Electoral contests, which excited the liveliest interest of the candidates, were more or less a matter of indifference to the labouring poor; the peasantry in particular were not keen to pay their vergi in time merely for the sake of registering as electors and of those who paid, the purpose for having done so was not necessarily the exercise of their electoral rights. The Commissioner of Nicosia noted in the aftermath of the 1886 election:

It is worthy of note that out of 63 villages, with a total of 1,556 registered electors, not a single voter went to the poll and that 40 villages with an electorate number of 1,025 sent one voter apiece, and he, in the majority of cases, was the village representative whose presence is compulsory!³²⁰

From those who went to the poll many were content to do as their betters required, especially if no issues were at stake and/or a modest return was given in exchange for their vote. The

320. SA1:3829/1886, Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, November 8, 1886.

politics of the first decade of colonial rule therefore, being practically devoid of ideological issues, remained strongly clientelist in nature.³²¹ The Times of Cyprus scornfully pointed to the demand for contracts from the Municipal Council of Nicosia by the fraternities of carpenters, ironsmiths and masons. These craftsmen, having voted as they were told in the elections of August 1888, claimed in consequence

some participation in Municipal loaves and fishes...On the other hand one of some authority has reminded the craftsmen that for any services rendered to the party in question on the day of the polling they were then and there well and promptly paid.

The paper added that funds for such purposes were raised by the churches of Nicosia, particularly the wealthy parish church of Phaneromeni.³²²

Money talked in electoral contests; however, such divisions in allegiances could pose no danger for the overall domination of the traditional elite, whose business was the administration of public affairs. In Nicosia the ailing Archbishop was increasingly reliant for running the affairs of the Church, and of the Greek community in general, on the close cooperation of influential laymen. The most important was Paschalis Constantinides, who had utilised his influence from the Turkish period to build up the most extensive network of patrons and brokers, stretching from

321. On this subject see generally Michael Attalides, "Forms of Peasant Incorporation in Cyprus during the Last Century", Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury eds., Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies, London, 1977, pp. 141-142.

322. The Times of Cyprus, August 31, 1888.

Nicosia to Famagusta and Kyrenia. By the late 1880s his closest associate became Achilleas Liassides, son of the first agent of the Ottoman Bank in Nicosia, who had himself enjoyed great influence with the Turkish authorities.³²³ In May 1895 Paschalis Constantinides and Achilleas Liassides were offered, and accepted, posts in the Executive Council, becoming literally part of the Government. Explaining their appointment the High Commissioner noted that as members of the Legislative Council both men had invariably spoken with knowledge, sense and moderation.³²⁴

In Famagusta the main local spokesman was Loukas Paissiou, descendant of the Lusignan family of the Lapiers. Though having espoused the Greek Orthodox faith, and became master of Famagusta's high school, L. Paissiou retained a Francolevantine outlook and viewed the British connection with particular favour. The Municipal Commission of Famagusta and the Mayor, Soteris Emphiedjis, had similar political inclinations.³²⁵ The most conservative political views prevailed in Kyrenia. Isolated from the

323. See a political profile of P. Constantinides and A. Liassides in CO 67/60, "Confidential Memorandum". Enclosed in H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 23, 1889.

324. CO 67/85, "Confidential", Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to the Marquis of Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 7, 1894.

325. For the political situation in the district of Famagusta see Costas Kyrris, "Enas politikos logos tou Louka Paissiou" (A political oration by Loukas Paissiou), Kypriaka Khronika, (New Series) No. 39-43, January - May, 1964, pp. 498-507.

rest of the island by the mountain range, it had been dominated by the major tax-farmers and merchants of wheat and carobs, such as Shacallis, Severis and Demetriades.

Nationalist sentiment was based in the two port towns of Larnaca and Limassol. The former was the more moderate. The European heritage of the consular elite had naturally pitted them against Ottoman Turkey. Imperial Britain however was a different case. The richest and most liberal of bourgeois empires brought benefits which could not be lightly discarded. Even enosis, which remained an unswerving goal, might be plausible through a Greco-British understanding - the empire was after all Greece's major protecting power. This left Limassol as the foremost of nationalist centres. The town had no Consuls but consular agents, local Cypriots who claimed no descent from Europe. Along with the relatively large number of inhabitants who had acquired Greek nationality, they formed the nucleus of nationalist sentiment in the town and district. In October 1878 the Times correspondent noted:

At Limassol...it is reported to be most difficult to procure the effective co-operation of the Municipal Council in any work, and almost impossible to obtain labour. The people seem well to do and independent, and they exhibit, I think, in contrast with other places in the island, a certain indifference and want of respect towards the British authorities.³²⁶

326. The Times, "Cyprus", October 10, 1878.

This unruly attitude was most noticeable amongst Limassol town's lower strata. In 1883 Alex Gordon, Chief Commandant of Military Police, noted that the town needed nearly as many policemen though having less than half of Nicosia's population. Upon the Chief Secretary's comment on this apparent disparity Gordon replied that in Limassol the number of wine shops, cafes and brothels was far larger in proportion to those in Nicosia and Larnaca.³²⁷

V. Ideas as Forces of Change

British rule had brought formal equality for all of the island's inhabitants, supplemented by the introduction of a rudimentary electoral system. Though for the reayas of Ottoman rule these changes represented a definite improvement, they were at the same time changes which had come to them from outside. The Greek labouring poor had not helped bring about their politically transformed world but were broken into it; the process of adaptation was therefore rather slow, because neither the lay elite nor the clergy were prepared to exercise their influence in leading the population toward a challenge of the new status quo. Still, the mass of the population, though inarticulate, were gradually to begin finding a language in which to express their aspirations about their world.

327. SA1/7749, Alex Gordon, Chief Commandant of Military Police, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, August 13, 1883.

Education thus became a major agency of political socialization. During the Ottoman period only Turkish schools were in receipt of state aid, Greek schools making ends meet by communal contributions. Under British rule, this discrimination was done away with. Government aid, which rose by 1886 to an average subsidy of £15.4 to each school, proved to be, according to the Inspector of Education, an immense stimulus to the establishment of Christian schools.³²⁸ Their numbers increased from 99 in 1881 to 273 in 1901.³²⁹ This was twice as fast a pace of expansion compared with the Turkish community's schools, the corresponding figures for which were 71 to 144. The number of pupils of both communities grew more rapidly, partly because the improved road system enabled children from neighbouring villages to attend school. In 1881 there was a total of 6,776 pupils in the island's schools. Greek pupils, at 4,907, made 72% of this figure. By 1901 the number of Turkish pupils had increased to 5,176, an impressive expansion of 177%. For the Greeks, who had stopped being designated as an inferior community, the corresponding increase was higher, at 15,712 the equivalent of 209%.³³⁰

328. SA1:3637/1886, Joshua Spencer, Inspector of Schools, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, October 15, 1886.

329. Cleovoulos Myrianthopoulos, I paidia en Kypro epi Anglokratias 1878-1946 (Education in Cyprus during English Rule), Limassol, 1946, p. 275.

330. For these figures see Canon F. Newham, "The System of Education in Cyprus", Board of Education Special Reports on Educational Subjects, London, 1905, p. 21.

The spread of literacy released forces which could not entirely be kept under control by the Greek clerical and lay establishment. Nurtured as Ottoman subjects they had hitherto dominated a largely illiterate populace, whose intellectual faculties did not extend beyond religious texts. Literacy as such, however, tended to produce self-awareness and consciousness of one's own condition, more exigent needs and higher aspirations. What is more the emphasis of the whole set of ideas inculcated to school children was shifting from Christianity to Hellenism. This was a consequence of the fact that the Greek community, traditionally willing to contribute heavily toward the upkeep of their education, had also safeguarded the system's independence. Turkish education passed from dependancy upon the Ottoman authorities to dependancy upon the British. In 1901 the Turkish community had still only one secondary school, the Idade. The Inspector of Schools, Canon Newham, noted that this school

was in the days before the British occupation controlled and supported by the Turkish Government. The British Government has succeeded to the charge of this school, which is now the only school in the Island, exclusively directed and supported by the Government.³³¹

On the other hand, the Greek Pancyprian Gymnasium, founded in Nicosia in 1893, though receiving a grant in aid as a training ground for teachers for elementary schools, was under independent management. The Greek secondary schools in Larnaca and Limassol were neither aided nor controlled by the Government. Newham com-

331. Ibid., p. 15.

pleted his report in a somewhat gloomy note: "The Greek Christian High Schools are not visited by the Inspector except upon invitation by their committees".³³²

Even elementary education, which was in theory under the overall supervision of the Government, gradually evolved into a system which, according to the programme of teaching submitted to the Inspector of Schools, was designated "on the basis of the programme which is in use in the elementary schools of Greece".³³³ This included a great deal of religious and moral teaching, in addition to the fact that the teacher had to accompany school children to vespers and Sunday mass. However, schools utilising purely religious texts were becoming a thing of the past. The Greek language, ancient and modern, and the history of Greece were now generally being taught from books imported from Athens. In 1886 the prescribed syllabus for third year pupils was headed by a text titled Peri Ethnikis Agoghis (On National Instruction) and was followed by I Heroes tis Neas Ellados (The Heroes of Modern Greece).³³⁴

332. Ibid.

333. SA1:476/1886, "Programma dhidaskalias mathimatou dhimotikou scholiou" (Programme of teaching in elementary schools). Enclosed in Joshua Spencer, Inspector of Schools, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, February 1, 1886.

334. SA1:1723/1886, "List of books approved for use in Christian Elementary Schools", enclosed in Spencer to Warren, April 29, 1886.

Of equal importance was the fact that the personnel of Greek elementary education was undergoing a change. In elementary schools literate villagers and priests were rapidly being displaced by teachers who had studied in the secondary schools of the three main towns. These establishments were in turn modelled on their counterparts in Greece and were staffed by graduates of the University of Athens. The long-term result of this system was summed up at the turn of the century by the High Commissioner Haynes-Smith:

The whole of the Greek school system is being used as an organisation for the Hellenic propaganda. The masters of the Elementary Schools are trained at the Gymnasium and other secondary schools to believe that their proper aim is to instill into the minds of the youth of the Island that their great objects in life are to advance the cause of union with Greece and to get rid of the payment of the Tribute to Turkey and further to oppose the English Administration.³³⁵

Greek nationalist ideas were being sown on fertile ground, already well prepared by hostility to colonial administrators, who taxed the Cypriots when they did not tell them what to do. In these circumstances Greek education, being identified not with the British Empire but with the Kingdom of Greece, became a potentially subversive force. An increasingly larger section of the labouring poor were themselves acquiring the rudiments of education so that by the end of the century reading and writing was no exceptional ability. With the introduction of the first

335. CO 67/124, "Confidential", W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 4, 1900.

printing press in the island, three weeks after the arrival of the British, the locally-printed word signalled a rapid expansion in the movement of ideas, which contrasted with the cultural aridity of the Ottoman period. The early years of British rule witnessed the development of the ballad as the dominant form of literature meant for the illiterate and the semi-literate. The written word reached the masses, in printed double sheets sold by ballad mongers, who regaled passers-by with renderings of their wares. Information thus transmitted, in writing and in traditional oral forms, marked at first, events which aroused popular imagination: romances, murders or natural disasters.³³⁶ In 1892 the maturing of national awareness was reflected in the widespread grief in the island over the death of Princess Alexandra Georghievna, wife of Russia's Grand Duke Paul and daughter of the Greek King George A' and Queen Olga. An eight page ballad, O thanatos tis Vasilopoulas mas Alexandras (The death of our Princess Alexandra), came out in 2,000 copies.³³⁷

336. On this point see Costantinos Yiangoullis, Oi poiitarides tis Kyprou (The folk poets of Cyprus), Salonica, 1976, pp. 37-53.

337. I Ephimeris Kyprou, "Simeioseis peri ton en Kypro typothendon kai engrafendon vivlion" (Notes on the books printed and registered in Cyprus), February 17, 1893.

Works published in Cyprus began to be recorded in 1892, in I Ephimeris Kyprou, the Greek edition of the Cyprus Gazette. For a list of publications prior to 1892 see the index to the collection of C. D. Cobham in Subject Catalogue of the Royal Empire Society, Volume 4, London, 1937, pp. 56-58.

Even more pervasive was the newspaper word, whose transmission might be made through the pulpit or the cafe meeting. Literate people, even those in remote communities, would thus formulate their own opinion and that of their illiterate neighbours, by subscribing to a weekly newspaper. Cyprus, the first newspaper of the island, came out in Larnaca in August 1878, ten weeks into the occupation.³³⁸ The initiative for the edition of this first newspaper came from outside the island. The editor, Theodoulos Constantinides, was a Cypriot who had for years been a teacher in the Greek community of Cairo, from where he had received encouragement for his journalistic endeavours in Cyprus. Though Cyprus was a short lived affair T. Constantinides later launched the more successful Neon Kition, which also came out in Larnaca, on May 23, 1879. Alithia, founded in Limassol in December 1880, was edited by Aristotelis Palaiologos, a Greek from Constantinople, whose family had settled in the island during the mid-19th century.³³⁹ Stasinos, which came out in Larnaca in 1881, was the first paper to have a local editor, a teacher by the name of Themistoclis Theoharides. Journalistic activity hinged on the two port towns of the island, both of which were soon to have a second newspaper: Salpinx in Limassol, in 1884, edited by

338. For an account of the early years of Cypriot journalism see generally Andreas Sophocleous Symvoli stin historia tou kypriakou typou (A contribution to the history of the press in Cyprus), Vol. A' 1878-1890, Nicosia, 1995.

339. For a biographical note on Palaiologos see Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., pp. 175-176.

Stylianos Hourmouzios, and Enosis in Larnaca, in 1885, edited by Christodoulos Kouppas. No newspaper originated in Nicosia, where continuity was more obvious than change, until 1881, when Neon Kition was transferred there from Larnaca. When this paper closed down in 1884 the capital was left without a locally produced newspaper for another three years, until Stasinós, which had been renamed Phoní tis Kyprou, was by 1887 also transferred from Larnaca to Nicosia.³⁴⁰

This expansion was the outcome not only of heightened political controversy in the island but also of public interest in it. All newspapers represented varying shades of Greek nationalism and devoted a major part of their space to giving Cypriots hard facts about their fellow Greeks in the Kingdom and about Greece's relations with other powers. On the first issue of Cyprus, on August 17/29, 1878, T. Constantinides wrote in his editorial: "The pen of my journalism will be forever guided by a Greek heart. I neither can, nor wish to hide this".³⁴¹ Alithia was similarly described by the High Commissioner as "a newspaper established...as a propagandist of Hellenic sentiments".³⁴² Even the most moderate paper of the period, Enosis, was named after the word which was a synonym for the union of Cyprus to Greece.

340. Author's investigations.

341. Cyprus, "Tois omogenesi mou" (To my compatriots), August 17/29, 1878.

342. CO 67/42, Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Stanhope, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 28, 1886.

The appearance of locally produced newspapers, greatly expanded the numbers of those who effectively comprised the Greek political nation. In 1880 the total circulation of the two Greek newspapers, Alithia and Neon Kition, was listed at approximately 2,050 a week.³⁴³ By 1900 there were seven Greek newspapers, with a circulation of approximately 4,600 copies.³⁴⁴ Moreover official figures understate the actual impact of the press on the formulation of political opinions. A single newspaper would be read aloud in a cafe, for the benefit of the illiterate. Politics, inextricably bound up with information, was thereby disseminated through the press, which, fostered by the road and mail system, acted as a collective guiding force. Anti-government and nationalist sentiments were thus conveyed from bourgeois agitators and discontented clergymen in the towns to the labouring poor, whether living in the capital or the most remote of rural communities.

During the period of economic distress, in 1887-1889, the impact of the press on the spread of anti-government sentiment was very considerable and was reported as such by District Commissioners. In a despatch to the Colonial Office the High Commissioner summarised a report from the Commissioner of Limassol,

343. This figure may be exaggerated because the entry for Neon Kition, at about 1,500, included copies sent to foreign countries and circulated gratuitously (Cyprus Blue Book for the Year 1880, Nicosia, 1881, p. 250)

344. Cyprus Blue Book for the Year 1900-1901, Nicosia, 1902, p. 294.

which noted a spirit of resistance to the Government revenue demands in the villages. Among other causes of disaffection the Commissioner had pointed to

the unchecked liberty of the press, the influences of village school masters and priests who are in touch with the clergy and clubs in the towns, and who communicate to the peasants what is said in the newspapers.³⁴⁵

Even those who could not read, and who did not listen to the sermons of the more educated members of their community, could still benefit from the increased opportunities of acquaintance with the world. Ordinary people, by simply moving out of the natural economy, having to purchase not only the luxuries, but even the necessities of life, met and traded in wine shops, markets and bakers' shops, which could serve both as fora for debate and as launching pads for popular agitation. This kind of direct political communication was most effectively carried out through the cafe, which was open to all those, including journeymen and apprentices, who could afford the beverages offered. Such was the case of the tavern set up by Nicolaos Hadjisavvas, outside the walls of Nicosia which was, according to Phoni tis Kyprou, frequented "by the democratic and labouring population, the majority...perhaps because, after all, that is where the sovereign currency is the dearest piastre".³⁴⁶ Cafes could be

345. CO 67/61, Sir H. E. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State of the Colonies, July 15, 1889.

346. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I protevousa tin nikta" (The capital by night), August 8, 1893.

centres of political and nationalist communication, in ways comprehensible to ordinary folk. In March 1885, according to Salpinx, people ran to a Limassol cafe in great numbers in order to watch four one-act plays on the Greek War of Independence. The audience were moved to tears by the last one and, through thunderous applause, demanded a repetition of the performance.³⁴⁷

347. Salpinx, "Fyrdin migdin" (Pell-mell), March 6, 1885.

CHAPTER 5

CHANGES IN LANDED PROPRIETORSHIP AND THE RURAL CRISIS

I. The Confirmation of Private Property in Land

Until the middle of the 1880s the poor of the island had been toiling in poverty but also in relative security regarding their ability to make ends meet. Given the fact that the mass of the population lived off their plots of land, any violation in the terms of this system was bound to create significant social problems. The reform of the tax system introduced by the new administration became inextricably linked with the third kind of property whose nature had been modified by the arrival of the British: property in land. A decisive step in the process of consolidation of private property in land was signalled by the abolition of Iltizam and the entire system by which taxation was levied on communities, the village commission in turn assessing the amount to be paid by each inhabitant. The British for their part, considering it natural that taxes should be paid directly by the subject to the state, imposed a system similar to the Ryotwari, which had already been at work in the western part of India. This entailed individual assessments of every tradesman and peasant, a strenuous task dictated by the administration's effort to maximize state revenue. By reaching directly to the workshop and threshing floor the state would do away with the

leaks to the flow of revenue endemic in the Iltizam system and at the same time be able to give with ease more turns to the screw of surplus extraction.³⁴⁸ However the most significant aspect of the British fiscal reform was the elimination of communal responsibility for tax payments, which effectively amounted to private property in the soil, thus completing the process which had begun with the Tanzimat reforms. Property was at last fully-fledged, the peasant being perfectly free to manage his holding with regard to alienation and mortgage. The Ryotwari system, of individual assessments in privately owned plots, entailed more efficient facilities for effecting transfers of immovable property as well as a system of triangulation and survey of the land.

Survey was introduced in Cyprus from the first year of colonial rule under the direction of Major Lloyd, an officer of experience in the Indian Survey Department, and was continued by Lieutenant R. E. Kitchener (later Lord Kitchener of Khartoum). For the efficient completion of this process the Defteri Hâkkani and Takriri Emlâk were amalgamated and placed under the Director of Survey.³⁴⁹ These reforms effectively curtailed the encroachments of powerful interests neighbouring to the smallholder's land and further enhanced his security of tenure. Yet this

348. For the fiscal reform introduced by the British see Cyprus Report, 1879, op. cit., Major General Biddulph to the Marquis of Salisbury, January 15, 1880, pp. 11-16.

349. [C.-3092], Cyprus, Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for 1880, Sir Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Earl of Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 7, 1881, (London, 1881), p. 4.

process of confirmation of private property in the soil was something of a mixed blessing for the Cypriot peasantry, because it meant that the poorest and least enterprising were exposed to the potential dangers of debt and loss of their perfectly alienable property. The last remaining defence of the rural smallholder lay in the structure of credit, which did not facilitate confiscation of an insolvent debtor's property. However, processes were already under way which would radically transform the nature of the debtor/creditor relationship.

One year into their rule the British effectively abolished imprisonment for debt, by a circular of August 2, 1879, which obliged plaintiffs to pay for the debtor's food while he was in prison. No plaintiff was prepared to meet an expense of this nature and, given the inadequacy of procedures for execution of judgement against property, money-lenders were temporarily left in a quandary.³⁵⁰ In a petition to the Chief Secretary, on February 17, 1881, 102 money-lenders, from all districts of the island, underlined the financial straits in which they had been forced by the gap in the existing legislation: "We therefore have, since the decision of your Excellency that no man be imprisoned for debt, great difficulty in collecting money outstanding in the agricultural parts of the country".³⁵¹

350. For the effect of the circular see the reports of the Commissioners of Famagusta and Paphos, in Annual Report, 1879, op. cit., pp. 97 and 167 respectively.

351. SA1:4126, Efraim Economides and others to the Chief Secretary, February 17, 1881.

Apart from the moneyed establishment's protests the Government's own economic rationale also dictated the updating of execution of judgement. A first step in this direction, limited to executions against movable property, was taken within the framework of the Cyprus Courts of Justice Order of 1882, which had overhauled the legal system in Cyprus.³⁵² Immovable property, which formed the substance of a household's wealth, was left under existing procedures until 1885, when appropriate legislation was introduced simultaneously by the elected members of the Legislative Council and the colonial authorities. The elected members' Bill was introduced on February 1, 1885 by Bishop Kyprianos of Kitium and seconded by two representatives of the moneyed establishment: Mehmed Ali Fehmi, scion of a prominent Turkish family in Larnaca, and Zeno Pierides, merchant and shipping agent.³⁵³ The spirit of the law in the debtor/creditor cleavage was reflected in the wording:

For the protection of lenders it shall be lawful from and after the 1st/13th March, 1885, for them to demand and obtain from the Court the right to seize, sequesterate and for the purpose of safe custody retain immovable property also.³⁵⁴

352. J. C. Howard and C. C. Geraghty, The Imperial Orders in Council Applicable to Cyprus, 1878-1st November 1923, London, 1923, pp. 93-179. See especially Part IV.-Civil Cases, pp. 102-112.

353. See specifically, SA1:246/1885, "Right of Seizure of Im-movable Property", 2/14 January, 1885.

354. The Cyprus Gazette, February 2, 1885:

In the event the Bishop withdrew his Bill, considering that the same ground was covered by another Bill prepared by the Chief Justice, which was a more sophisticated legal instrument.³⁵⁵ Both Bills provided the exemption from sale of the utensils necessary for the trade of the debtor, or one beast of burden if he were an agriculturalist, the bedding and clothing necessary for himself and his family and a month's provision of grain.³⁵⁶ This exemption was not due to the charitable feelings of the Church or of the colonial authorities. Judge Collyer, who had drafted the Bill, noted that the Turkish law had contained a similar provision and added: "It is seldom to the advantage of a money-lender to sell the whole of a peasant debtor's property out & out, as more can be got by allowing him to subsist and cultivate his land".³⁵⁷

Neither Bill dealt with the nature of the transaction, though predatory usurious practices were prevalent at the time. In certain cases the merchant money-lenders' methods of enrichment were known to be outrightly illegal. In 1884, a year before the passing of the Law, according to a report on usury by the Inspector

355. See specifically SA1:246/1885, Note by R. E. Sinclair, Clerk of Council, April 8, 1885.

356. The Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, February 2, 1885.

357. CO 67/37, Report by W. R. Collyer, Queen's Advocate, on a Law "To Consolidate and Amend the Law Relating to the Powers of the Court in Civil actions and to the Execution of Judgement in such Actions", April 28, 1885. Enclosure II in Sir Robert Bid-
dolph, High Commissioner, to Lord Derby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 28, 1885.

of Revenue, there was as a rule a difference between the weight the villagers delivered and the real weight of the good of 5% or 8%, to the profit of the merchant. The credit transaction itself could be so complicated, that no one who was not actually concerned with the matter could go through it, least of all the illiterate and ignorant villagers.³⁵⁸ For the Bills introduced by the administration and the elected members of the Legislative Council however, the only measure of justice was thereafter to be the parties' own agreement, within a fictional free market concept of social relations. The rise of freedom of contract, as the pre-eminent doctrine of English private law in the Victorian age, was reflected in the Bill being introduced in a colony which had just come out of the Ottoman system. Paragraph 2, provided that

it shall be lawful for the Court to order that a writ of summons may be served...whenever it shall appear to the Court that the cause of action has arisen on any breach or alleged breach in Cyprus of any contract wherever made or in respect of any property subject to the laws of Cyprus.³⁵⁹

Though the underlying assumption of equal bargaining power between the parties was even more of a fiction in Cyprus than in the imperial metropolis, the letter and spirit of the law were heavily weighted against the debtor. Clauses 3 to 6 of the law

358. SA1:1656/1884, "Confidential", A. Bistachi, Inspector of Revenue, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, July 31, 1884.

359. The Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, "Draft of a Law to Consolidate and Amend the Law Relating to the Powers of the Courts in Civil Actions and to the Execution of Judgement in such Actions", February 7, 1885.

were, according to the Queen's Advocate's report, "exceedingly important to prevent the debtor from fraudulently making away with his property before judgement".³⁶⁰ Law 1 of 1885 laid the foundation of civil procedure in Cyprus for the next 55 years and at the same time removed the basic defences of the indebted smallholder. As the last remnants of Ottoman feudalism in the countryside were eliminated, the new relations of capitalism were ushered in. In May 1886, Harry Thompson, Commissioner of Paphos, reported on a year's working of the law:

A man obtains his judgement and almost immediately can apply for an order or execution on the movable property of the debtor which is issued and carried out without any trouble to him and all fees and expenses recovered at the same time. Or, if the movable property is not sufficient, he gets all information he requires from the Land Registry Office about the immovable property and everything, in fact, is done to help him.

During the past year the people have got very heavily into debt, far more than they can hope to pay this year out of the balance of their crops, after retaining sufficient for their own requirements and I have no hesitation in saying that, if the money-lenders begin taking advantage of their privileges under the law and selling up the property of their debtors to obtain the last due from them, in a very few years we shall have a population of paupers in Paphos District.³⁶¹

Such an assumption could not materialise, so long as agricultural output warranted a surplus, over and above the bare minimum for the subsistence of a very frugal population. A slump in production, which would bring social tensions to a head, had as yet not been experienced in the colony.

360. CO 67/37, Report by Collyer, April 28, 1885, op. cit.

361. SA1:1696/1886, Thompson to Warren, May 18, 1886.

II. Taxation, Usury and Rural Expropriation

The omens of such a crisis forthcame during the autumn of 1886, with the first signs of a drought which was to be without precedent in the island's living memory. By the end of the season, the most fortunate parts of the island had received only scattered rainfall and produced just enough to feed the people who worked them. Total production of wheat, which had during the period 1882-1886 averaged at 1,568,580 kiles had in 1887 fallen to 874,240, i.e. 56% of the preceding year's output.³⁶² In some regions, the slump in agricultural output assumed catastrophic proportions. The 14 villages of North Carpas, where rainfall was always very erratic, had in 1886 produced a total of 46,930 kiles of wheat, and that had been considered a fairly poor year. By June 1887, when the harvest was in, this figure fell to 4,480 kiles, a mere 9.5%.³⁶³

The situation in the countryside alarmed not only the peasantry, who were directly affected, but also the major appropriators of rural surplus, the Government and the merchant money-lenders. The Government's policy toward the plight of the peasantry was formulated by a whole sequence of considerations.

362. The figures have been worked out from SA1:1657/1902, "Statement showing, since the occupation, the general production, the exports and quantity of cereals remaining in the Island". (One kile is equal to 28.2 kilograms)

363. CO 67/52, Arthur Young, Commissioner of Famagusta, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, May 4, 1888. Enclosed in Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 8, 1888.

Officials on the spot would be expected to adopt a less distant attitude towards the wretched condition of the peasantry; in London however, the Colonial Office heeded to the directives of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, who faced the prospect not only of a drastic fall in the year's revenue but also of the irrecoverable loss of accumulated tax arrears. Following a communication from the Treasury, the Secretary of State for the Colonies asked the government of the island, early in 1887, to ensure the collection of these arrears which stood at £40,310. The usual way of recovering overdue taxation was the forced sale of movable and immovable property, with all the ill feeling this entailed. On April 18, 1887, the Malta Standard reported on the misery prevalent in many Cypriot villages and the sale of peasant properties at very low prices, adding the following: "the Government is treating very severely those who have not paid the taxes. Even cooking utensils and women's underclothing were sold by the police, in order to satisfy the rapacious tax-collector".³⁶⁴

The harvest having failed however, the Lords Commissioners' demands were impossible to fulfil. On September 26, 1887, the Secretary of State warned the High Commissioner that in view of the expected hardship to many of the inhabitants, the amount of tax arrears would again increase materially. The state of the accounts and the number of cases outstanding, were considered quite unacceptable and were blamed on the failure of revenue officers

^{364.} The article of the Valetta weekly was cited in the Times of Cyprus, May 23, 1887.

to perform their duties with sufficient energy and zeal. District Commissioners were singled out for special rebuke. The Commissioner for Limassol was to be warned to be more careful in the future and the Commissioner for Nicosia was to be urged to make vigorous efforts in order to clear up the accumulated arrears.³⁶⁵ After four weeks of vigorous efforts the Receiver General sent a gloomy statement to the Chief Secretary regarding revenue for the month of September, as compared with the same month in 1886:

The statement is far from satisfactory showing a falling off, considerable in most cases, under almost all heads of receipts. I have repeatedly urged the District Commissioners to use their utmost efforts to get in as much money as possible. I have no reason to suppose they have not done so, and so far as concerns the collections of last month I have no reason to suppose that the tax-collectors have not done their best in the matter of their collections. There is no doubt they find it extremely difficult to get in money, in consequence of the far from prosperous state of the taxpayers this year in most parts of the island.³⁶⁶

The crisis had highlighted a significant aspect of the process of surplus extraction: the antagonism between the Government and the merchant money-lenders. In Ottoman times, rural surplus was divided up between tax-farmers and government in shares which had more or less been agreed upon beforehand. Money-lenders however, thriving as free economic agents, would not aim at any sort of understanding with the Government; through

365. CO 67/47, Lord Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, September 26, 1887.

366. CO 67/49, James Swettenham, Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, October 24, 1887. Enclosure II in Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 4, 1887.

personal knowledge of their debtors, they were much better poised for securing their pound of flesh. During 1887, out of a total registered value of immovable property auctioned at forced sales amounting to £15,337, £1,142 (7.4%) had been sold at the instance of the Government and the rest £14,195 (92.6%) at the instance of private parties.³⁶⁷

"The tax-collector is one: the usurers are legion", observed C. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca. "The former is not ubiquitous and his procedure is legal and cumbrous, while the usurer can employ as many agents as he likes, & can seize and load up at once all he can find".³⁶⁸ The pattern seemed unchanging. During 1888, out of a total value of immovable properties sold at £12,782, the authorities secured a mere £524 (4.1%). The rest £12,258 (95.9%) was appropriated by the money-lenders. The authorities only improved on their share of the spoils in 1889, getting out of a total of £20,116, the sum of £3,715 (18.5%). In the antagonism between tax-collectors and money-lenders, the losers were invariably the rural poor. The success of the money-lenders in extracting assets out of smallholders made for a harder attitude on the part of British officials on the spot. In July 1889, the Commissioner of Paphos, D. Hammish, reported on a petition pleading for leniency in the collection of taxes:

367. These percentages have been worked out from the table of figures cited in Cyprus (Enforced Sales), compiled by Robert G. W. Herbert, London, 1891, p. 6.

368. SA1:3450/1889, C. Delaval Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, November 16, 1889.

According to the instructions received from the Receiver General and Chief Secretary, warrants have been issued and the tax-collectors have been directed to seize the crops on the threshing-floors for payment of arrears due to Government. I consider the complaints of the villagers contained in the Telegram to H.E., the High Commissioner much exaggerated. I believe the villagers have been urged to complain by certain merchants to whom the villagers are in debt and if the crops are not seized by Government it will be the merchants, ^{not} the villagers, who will benefit by the arrangement.³⁶⁹

Though the major share of the rural surplus was diverted to the money-lenders, the extent of human misery in the island was a bad reflection on the colonial administration; efforts to maximise tax revenue became the subject of criticism outside Cyprus, blemishing Britain's imperial image. On December 19, 1888, the High Commissioner was addressed by the Secretary of State, Lord Knutsford, upon reports in the Egyptian press that the authorities in Cyprus were seizing everything possessed by debtors defaulting in their taxes. Knutsford repeated an earlier proposal, for legislation exempting from seizure articles necessary for the industry of peasants and artisans, "as it is most important that all grounds for rumours of undue severity should be removed".³⁷⁰ The Government responded by drafting legislation by which movable property exempt from execution for debts under civil judgement, would also be exempt from execution for taxes owed to the state.³⁷¹

369. SA1:2224/1889, D. Hammish, Commissioner of Paphos, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, July 20, 1889.

370. [C.-5812], op. cit., Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, December 19, 1888, p. 28.

371. The Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, April 5, 1889.

However, it soon transpired that such a Bill would not be enough, either for upholding Britain's image or for helping keep the mass of smallholders on their land. Existing procedure on civil actions made no provision for the indebted household's only, or last, pair of plough-cattle. The Receiver General pointed out: "If we abstain from seizing them, and leave them untouched, there is nothing to prevent any private creditor from seizing them in satisfaction of a private debt and sell them by auction".³⁷² The authorities' approach was also coming under pressure by the introduction of another Bill on the subject, by Nicolaos Rossos, member of the Legislative Council. This Bill, while also exempting from execution goods under judgement to the state for debts or issues of corn, was subject to restrictions when it came to certain privileged debts to private creditors.³⁷³ All District Commissioners opposed this distinction. The Commissioner of Limassol observed:

The measure, if it were to become law, would I anticipate, seriously affect the collection of revenue. The proposals appear to be framed far more with a view to the protection of debtors against government claims than against those of private judgement creditors.³⁷⁴

372. SA1:101/1889, James Swettenham, Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, September 24, 1889.

373. The Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, "Draft of a Law to Exempt Certain Goods from Execution", February 8, 1889.

374. SA1:235/1889, R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to J. Swettenham, Receiver General, February 23, 1889.

The same differences surfaced during debate in the Legislative Council. The Queen's Advocate argued that the Bill introduced by Rossos, while protecting the articles in question from seizure by the Government, left those articles to fall into the hands of the money-lender.³⁷⁵ In the event, the two Bills were, by the following year, amalgamated into one.³⁷⁶ Law VII of 1890, "To Exempt Certain Goods from Execution", contained in one measure all the provisions respecting seizures in payment of debt, according to which the Crown and private creditors were placed on the same footing.³⁷⁷

In the Legislative Council, this was a compromise between the interests represented by official and elected members. The latter, coming from the elite of their communities, would often vote together on economic issues, if need be against the Government. Such a divergence of opinion between official and elected members arose over the wave of forced sales of immovable property; major money-lenders took possession of land, houses, trees and shops by a process of usury at its most grasping. The fall in the value of land meant that though the total registered value of immovables auctioned in 1887 had been £15,337, the value that had actually

375. Legislative Council Minutes, Volume V, April 8, 1889, p. 21a.

376. See an account of this process in CO 67/65, Sir H. E. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, June 28, 1890.

377. See the full text of the law in the Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, July 11, 1890.

been realised, and thereby removed from the debt lists, had only amounted to £8,912. In the autumn of 1887 the Director of Survey and the Commissioner of Famagusta made representations to the Queen's Advocate for the introduction of legislation, given that land, particularly in the region of Carpas, was being sold at prices "which rendered it almost a cruelty on the owners that it should be taken from them on such terms".³⁷⁸

In the event, during the following year, 1888, production of wheat rose considerably to 1,389,256 kiles, not far below the average for the period 1882-1886 at 1,568,580. Production of barley at 2,279,856 kiles, actually exceeded the average for the period, at 1,689,040.³⁷⁹ However, the usurious terms of alienation of mortgaged property did not ameliorate the debt situation. During the same year, 1888, the total registered value of property auctioned at forced sales stood at £12,782 -higher than any year since the occupation, except 1887. On April 11, 1888, the Secretary of State himself, suggested to the High Commissioner the investment of District Courts with discretionary powers to stay proceedings of execution on immovable property.³⁸⁰ Legislation was accordingly introduced in February 1889 by which

378. CO 67/60, W. R. Collyer, Queen's Advocate, May 3, 1889, "Report on a Law to enable the Courts to suspend execution of judgement by sale of land in certain cases". Enclosure in despatch of Sir H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 30, 1889.

379. SA1:1657/1902, "Statement", op. cit.

380. SA1:3199/1888, Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, April 11, 1888.

courts could stop the sale of immovable property if the price were unconscionable. In Committee however, the elected members made amendments to the Bill, the most serious of which was limiting to six months the time during which a sale might be stayed. The Government, considering that the amendment rendered the law almost nugatory as a protection to debtors, decided to reserve the law for that session of the Legislative Council.³⁸¹

Circumstances made imperative that the Bill be introduced again at the next session. In 1889, though production of wheat reached 1,930,720 kiles and of barley 2,754,584 - both record figures since the occupation - the year had also been a record year regarding the number of forced sales. The total registered value of property auctioned rose to £20,116, representing a 31% increase over 1887 and a 57% increase over 1888.³⁸² This time, and in spite of such a rate of expropriation, (perhaps even because of it) the elected members' opposition to the Bill was quite active. In the plenary session of the Legislative Council, on May 13, 1890, the first to take the floor was Kyrillos Papadopoulos, Bishop of Kyrenia. Like Kyprianos, Bishop of Kitium, who had five years before introduced the Bill for executing the sale of a debtor's land, the Bishop of Kyrenia now argued the case against postponement of such a sale.³⁸³ Foremost in op-

381. CO 67/60, Bulwer to Knutsford, May 30, 1889.

382. Enforced Sales, op. cit., p. 6.

383. See the texts of all speeches on the resolution in Legislative Council Minutes, Volume V, May 13, 1890, pp. 146b-147a.

posing the Government's Bill was the leading lay Greek member, Paschalis Constantinides. The High Commissioner explained in a despatch to the Secretary of State that Constantinides was himself said to be "a considerable money-lender", who borrowed from the banks at the official rate of interest and lent the money out at a higher rate.³⁸⁴ As in Ottoman times, ethnic distinctions were no barrier to cooperation in issues of mutual economic interest: Greek and Turkish members unanimously opposed and defeated the Government's Bill. Assessing their stand, the High Commissioner noted: "The real cause for that refusal is to be found in the fact that the elective members represent more the class of creditors, than the class which it is the duty of the Government to protect".³⁸⁵

Though the British did not succeed in checking usurious practices through the Legislative Council, they were at the same time not prepared to go far enough and impose appropriate legislation by Order in Council, preferring instead to reserve such a drastic measure for issues deemed as more significant. However, another reason for their lack of resolve, was the fact that within the ranks of the Government there was serious scepticism at the prospect of tampering with the forces of market capitalism. In 1891, a note on usury by the Chief Justice himself, Elliot

384. CO 67/66, "Confidential", Sir H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, September 3, 1890.

385. Ibid.

Bovill, questioned the wisdom of a policy which maintained an agricultural community of indifferently good quality on their holdings, whether they paid their debts or not. Bovill, added that his sentiments were very much in favour of protecting the peasant and that he was moved by the apparent hardship, of which he had often been witness, when a peasant had been deprived of his land for a miserable sum, which did not suffice to pay the creditor's legal expenses:

The question however must not be decided on grounds of sentiment...I believe that the history of all civilised nations will show that credit grows up in some way as I have indicated and that the means which the state in modern and civilised times has commonly adopted for enabling creditors to recover debts are by giving him the power to sell the property of his debtor...³⁸⁶

Modern and civilised times in Cyprus meant that rural expropriation became a process which was continuously tearing down the island's social fabric. The fact that during the next decade the authorities' share of the value of the properties auctioned never rose to more than 15%, did not salvage their image toward the mass of the people. On March 15, 1890 the Receiver General minuted:

At present the process of forced sales is going on rapidly and whatever misery is caused is attributed to the British regime, which is singularly innocent of making changes in the law which led to these sales...³⁸⁷

386. CO 67/69, Minute by E. Bovill, Chief Justice, August 8, 1890. Enclosed in despatch of Sir H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 3, 1891.

387. Ibid., Minute by J. Swettenham, Receiver General, April 14, 1891. Enclosed in Bulwer to Knutsford, April 3, 1891.

Under colonial rule the familiar pattern of the Ottoman period was therefore being repeated: local and foreign exploiters, competing for the meagre surplus of the rural labouring population. Rapacious officials and Prelates and corrupt tax-farmers had been replaced by grasping money-lenders and efficient tax-collectors.

III. The Poor Being Ground Down

In an island where six out of seven people were village dwellers, the consequences of a depression in the countryside would soon be relayed to the towns. After the occupation, the economy of the island, having been further subdued to market forces, was becoming more vulnerable to fluctuations of trade and demand. During the crisis which ensued in 1887, though the price of foodstuffs rose considerably, most cultivators failed to benefit, because their yield was barely adequate for their own household consumption. For tradesmen in towns the rise in the price of foodstuffs constituted an obvious burden, though more serious were the consequences of the diminished purchasing capacity of the peasantry and the decrease in demand for manufactured goods. Upon the ominous harvest prospects, in January 1887, Phoni tis Kyprou observed that the internal market had nearly ceased to operate and that economic activity had almost come to a standstill.³⁸⁸ By late spring the newspaper reported:

388. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), January 24, 1887.

Owing to the total drought of the winter season, trade is in a very bad state and, unfortunately, bankruptcies have become the sole visible sign of activity in our market. One can get very depressed by watching, and listening to, the public criers who auction away houses and merchandise on a daily basis and at very low prices.³⁸⁹

Hence, the agricultural crisis also affected quite adversely the living standards of town tradesmen, petty traders and wage-earners. A report by the Commissioner of Larnaca referred to the plight of Scala, the suburb which housed most of Larnaca's manufactures, and concluded thus: "Trade is slack and hammals, boatmen, masons and the like, find little or no employment".³⁹⁰ Limassol's Commissioner for his part noted in the spring of 1887:

Labour, for which there is comparatively little demand, is much cheaper. For example, workmen who have ordinarily in late years obtained wages at the rate of 1s. 6cp. to 1s. 8cp. per diem are now working for 7cp. - 8cp. and masons, who formerly received 3s. to 4s., now work for 1s. 6cp. to 2s. 4cp.³⁹¹

Certain sectors of manufacturing activity were threatened with extinction. This fate was being promised to shoemaking, which had on the eve of the British occupation attained the status of an export industry.³⁹² Nine years later, in 1887, Phonitis Kyprou reported on the predicament of Nicosia's shoemakers:

389. Ibid., May 23, 1887.

390. SA1:1098/1887, C. D. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, April 16, 1887.

391. SA1:1096/1887, R. L. N. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, April 21, 1887.

392. On the eve of the British occupation a considerable quantity of Cyprus shoes were being exported to Egypt (A. R. Saville, Cyprus, London, 1878, p. 144).

We are pleased to note that our municipality has been concerned with the fact that poverty is prevalent amongst artisans and that the shops in the bazaar have fallen into disuse. The municipality has released shoemakers from their rent obligations for the duration of one year. What used to be the shoemakers' bazaar is at present literally empty.³⁹³

As a consequence of the difficulties faced by the tradesmen of Nicosia, the municipality's annual revenue from trade rates declined sharply. This figure, which in 1887 had stood at £94, had by 1889 fallen to £41 and by 1891 to £10. In 1892 this revenue was an abysmal 6s. The President of the Municipal Commission, Merton King, noted that even the scanty collections of the last two or three years had been on account of arrears.³⁹⁴ The employment situation in the towns became worse by the increased availability of working hands. One year after the manifestation of the crisis, and in spite of the fact that agricultural output had largely recovered, the rising numbers of forced sales had kept an undiminished flow of destitute peasants to the towns. On July 21, 1888, Enosis reported on the situation in Larnaca:

The oldest of our compatriots say that they cannot recall such stagnation and misery, even though we are in the period of the cereal harvest.

Several people from the villages, accompanied by their children are wandering about our town, in order to beg. This is something without precedence, because these are not seasoned mendicants but people who have been stripped of their home, their animals and their plots of land and have been forced by want and hunger to engage in begging.³⁹⁵

393. Phoni tis Kyprou, July 18, 1887.

394. SA1:2256/1887, Minute by M. King, President of Nicosia Municipal Commission, to Harry Thompson, Chief Secretary, October 10, 1893.

395. Enosis, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), July 21, 1888.

Ten days later Salpinx noted an acute shortage of bread amongst Limassol town's wage-earning population. The labouring poor were in fact being driven to near despair:

A few days ago a group of workers had been considering the possibility of entering into a light scuffle amongst themselves to intentionally disturb public order. They had thereby been hoping to end up in jail, where they would be assured of receiving their ration of bread. Other workers have attempted to cut and sell stone even though quarrying is governed by very strict regulations. They offered no resistance to their being arrested and locked up. On interrogation they admitted that they had been aware of the law's severe restrictions and stated that they had been led to violate them for the sake of their daily bread and would in fact quarry again after their release.³⁹⁶

There were no municipal plans to meet the increase in the numbers of poor, out of which grew some of the most intractable problems of the period. There was, in any case, a definite correlation between overcrowding and disease, primarily as a result of deteriorating sanitary conditions. From the first days of the occupation, the island's towns were described as very dirty places. An Officer of the Army Medical Department noted on Famagusta: "Ordure lies about, nuisances of various kinds abound, and probably it is only the small number of inhabitants that prevents such an insanitary condition being productive of serious illness".³⁹⁷ The elementary scavenging measures introduced by the British, were rendered quite inadequate to meet the situation

396. Salpinx, "Aperghia" (A Strike), July 30, 1888.

397. SA1:1878/Box 1, Unnumbered file, Report by Surgeon Macnamara, Medical Officer of 26th Regiment., Enclosure "C" in Report by Captain Swaine, Civil Commissioner of Famagusta, August 10, 1878.

which developed by the end of the 1880s. A report by Dr. Frederick Heidenstam, Chief Medical Officer, on December 19, 1890, noted that sewage was being removed from public buildings and houses of a few foreign residents, only to be deposited in the most inconsiderate manner outside the towns, forming a belt of infectious deleterious matter around them. The sanitary condition of many of the private dwellings was most unsatisfactory and refuse produced by house and trade life was allowed to accumulate in cesspits and drains which could not carry them away.³⁹⁸

In such an environment, it was inevitable that the health situation would deteriorate and that diseases would spread. The meningitis epidemic, which broke out in the autumn of 1887, was an obvious instance of worsening living conditions in the neighbourhoods of the poor. Dr. F. Heidenstam reported accordingly:

Farther it appears evident that this infection infected only persons who could be justly called predisposed to it and that defective and insufficient diet as also (illegible) causes tending to weaken the vital powers constituted a predisposing diathesis. This has been sufficiently proved by the fact that generally speaking the persons affected were of the poor class, who owing to the bad harvest of last year were in a wretched pecuniary condition, living miserably on a low and insalubrious diet...

Cerebro-spinal meningitis appearing for the first time in an epidemic form in Cyprus, where epidemics of a serious nature, have, at least of late years been conspicuously rare and breaking out in the principal and most populous town, created a great sensation...³⁹⁹

398. SA1:3349/1890, F. Heidenstam, Chief Medical Officer, to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, December 19, 1890.

399. CO 67/53, Dr. Heidenstam, "Report on the Epidemic of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis in Cyprus". Enclosure in Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, June 8, 1888.

The island was bound to suffer more of such epidemics. During the second half of 1887, smallpox claimed 87 lives in the district of Larnaca alone, most of which were in the town.⁴⁰⁰ Once again death discriminated amongst classes. A meeting convened in the Commissioner's office noted that the high rate of mortality amongst patients who were treated at home was the result of their poor diet, because most of those infected came from the poorer classes.⁴⁰¹

Of the endemic diseases, tuberculosis was by the end of the decade acknowledged as the major killer. In March, 1901, Phoni tis Kyprou noted that the disease, which had a few years before been known to have infected only a limited number of individuals, had of recent, began to spread and cause indiscriminate deaths.⁴⁰² Given the many forms taken by the disease and the low diagnostic precision of the period, it is quite probable that from the early 1890s its incidence and fatality were being underestimated, rather than the reverse. Thriving on deprived bodies, the disease was allied to undernourishment, debilitation, unventilated living and working accommodation and squalor, all of which steadily deteriorated in the towns of the period. What

400. Neon Ethnos, "Khronika" (News chronicle), January 28/9, 1898.

401. Ibid., "I en to dioikitirio synelefsis ton politon peri tis evlogias" (The meeting of inhabitants in the Commissioner's office on the subject of smallpox), November 8/20, 1897.

402. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Ekthros epikindynos" (A dangerous enemy), March 17/2, 1901.

really worsened the health situation however, was the rising number of auctions of second hand items, in which the poor offered for sale the clothes of their deceased relatives, many of whom had died of tuberculosis. Large numbers of the labouring classes, who could no longer afford the prices prevalent in the bazaar, had been frequenting these auctions.⁴⁰³

Hence, the social transformation which had been inaugurated with the British occupation proceeded at an accelerating pace after the crisis of 1887-1888. The lower social strata were faced with a catastrophe, which they could hardly comprehend. They were deprived of any institutions which might protect them, as well as of any guides to their behaviour. It was only natural that many of them would sink into the demoralisation that accompanies any society which begins to break up. Alcoholism was one such instance. The Commissioner of Nicosia, in his report for 1886-1887, observed that during the past five years the number of taverns in his district had risen from 381 to 505. Whether this constituted proof of prosperity, or the reverse, he left to the political economists to decide, though he viewed it as harmful, from an industrial point of view.⁴⁰⁴ By the following year however, the authorities were clear in their opposition to the spread of hard liquor. In a circular to all Commissioners, the Chief Secretary

403. Ibid., "Ai dimoprasiai" (Auction sales), September 25/7, 1901.

404. [C.-5251], Report by Her Majesty's Acting High Commissioner for the year ending 31st March 1887, "Report by the Commissioner of Nicosia", (London, 1888), p. 55.

noted that the number of licensed houses was out of all proportion to the requirements of the people and the number of the inhabitants and asked that licences be issued with discretion.⁴⁰⁵

Explaining the effort to curtail licensed houses the High Commissioner informed the Secretary of State that these houses were tending to demoralisation, idleness, gambling and quarrels.⁴⁰⁶ The Cypriot moral establishment were equally concerned. A petition asking for the closing down of wine shops was sent from the village of Kiti to the Commissioner of Larnaca, who forwarded it to the Chief Secretary, commenting that it expressed the wishes of the most respectable inhabitants of the village.⁴⁰⁷ Such views were also put forward in a petition by the President of Lapithos' Municipal Commission, district of Kyrenia, in which he pointed out that legislation was lacking for the closing down of wine shops and requested permission to limit their numbers by the imposition of a heavy duty. In lucid language the petition bemoaned

the daily increasing corruption of the inhabitants, on account of the existence of the great number of wine shops and the incessant gambling that takes place within them, because the greater part of the labourers without property find no work on account of the pecuniary position of the unfortunate property owners,

405. SA1:653/1888, Circular of Chief Secretary to all Commissioners, October 31, 1888.

406. [C.-6189], Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for 1888-1889, Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 19, 1890, (London, 1890), p. 8.

407. SA1:515/1890, C. D. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, February 26, 1890.

are in despair and have become demoralised, assembling in the wine shops generally the greater part of the day and have recourse to stealing colocass, cotton, carobs, olives and other things for the purpose of obtaining the necessities of life...⁴⁰⁸

Women were particularly vulnerable to the deteriorating economic situation. Once the male breadwinner experienced a diminution of income, women in the house were under greater hardship. Opportunities for regular employment of women were severely limited and the few working outside the house were lacking in skills. These hardships were exemplified through the case of 20 destitute women from the town of Famagusta, who petitioned the High Commissioner for assistance:

The undersigned inhabitants of Famagusta being without anybody, old & some of us having young children, having no male to look after our maintenance & being of the very poorest class, beg that as the extraordinary straitened circumstances in which we are placed at present reach such a degree as to kill us, you will be so good as to give us each a grant in aid.⁴⁰⁹

The petitioners were not exaggerating. The report by Lawrence Olive, Local Commandant of Police, revealed a situation of genuine destitution. A 60 year old woman, with her right arm broken and no one to look after her, had no house and lived by begging. Another one, at 80 and lame in both legs, with no house and no one to look after her, was totally dependent on charity. The list included a man and his wife, both having their hands in-

408. SA1:653/1888, A. Koufides, President of Lapithos Municipal Commission, to High Commissioner, February 16/28, 1888.

409. SA1:1438/1888, Ayshe Dudu and 19 others to the High Commissioner, April 16, 1888.

capacitated, and their two sons, one lame and one blind, both suffering from hydropsy. The family had no house and lived by begging. Apart from the old and physically-infirm, this unfortunate group of paupers included young and middle-aged women, of good health, who had in the past been capable of fending for themselves. A 30 year old with four children, had normally been working as a washerwoman. So had a 25 year old negress and ex-slave, with two children. Another 30 year old had in the past worked as a house-cleaner. All three women were described as living in very poor conditions, the first two being also homeless. Most paupers were listed as having relatives, some of whom were described as too poor to help them.⁴¹⁰ The Chief Secretary examined the petition, pointed out that there was no government fund appropriate for the case and returned the list to the District Commissioner, with a recommendation that it be passed on to the Municipal Council. Arthur Young, Commissioner of Famagusta, selected the names of the poorest nine of these paupers and forwarded them to the Municipality; the Municipal Council stated in turn that, owing to want of funds, they were unable to do anything and the circle was closed with a postscript by Commissioner Young: "These persons go round begging at Famagusta & Varosha, and obtain bread from various houses which keeps them at any rate from starvation".⁴¹¹

410. Ibid., Report by Lawrence Olive, Local Commandant of Police, Famagusta, June 1, 1888.

411. Ibid., Arthur Young, Commissioner of Famagusta, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, June 12, 1888.

That was the last reference in the records to these Famagusta paupers. One can only speculate regarding the alternatives to begging to which the youngest of the women resorted to, in order to feed themselves and their children. Their circumstances, which were by no means unique, kept feeding the mushrooming houses of ill-repute - a development which soon gave rise to middle class concern. On March 14, 1894, a petition was addressed to Limassol's Municipal Council by a number of firms and individual residents of Saint Andrew's street, which ran along the town's trading centre. The petitioners protested against the nuisance caused by the appearance of a brothel in the area and the fact that its occupants "should be allowed to practise their calling in the manner they do in the principal street of the town and surrounded as they are by respectable families".⁴¹² Several such instances were reported during the decade. In 1899, an article in Alithia, on the spread of venereal diseases, was enlightening on the chronological progress of harlots in the capital:

Though ten or fifteen years ago there were few such houses, confined in the neighbourhood of Ayios Loukas, today they have captured all the central quarters of the town. Areas where in the past not even their shadow would dare show up are today packed with their lodgings and the number of brothels is swelling, to the obvious detriment of public health and virtue.⁴¹³

412. SA1:705/1904, W. Williamson and others to the President of Limassol Municipal Council, March 14, 1894.

413. Alithia, "En flegon zitima - Katapliktiki afxisis ton hamaitypeion" (A burning issue - The incredible increase in the number of brothels), July 29, 1899.

IV. Paternalism during Colonial Rule

The crisis had made inroads, in a society where the destitute had, traditionally, been confident of ensuring their daily bread. A heavy toll had been taken on the economic capacity of both private individuals and the clergy, whose charitable activities had never been meant to cope with mass pauperisation. Though the scale of relief needed had been without precedent, it was not undertaken as government or municipal policy. Unlike the imperial metropolis, where the Poor Law channelled relief through official hands, in Cyprus alms-giving was never indiscriminate and thereby did not lose the redeeming influence of personal kindness. In fact, the press could only view relief as a relation between persons. When it became clear that the Church was not in a position to cope with the mass of the poor, the task was undertaken by the lay establishment. In Nicosia, the first secular charitable brotherhood, Adelphotis Ayiou Joannou, founded in the quarter of Ayios Joannis, in February 1888, undertook the provision of medical care for the poor, as well as the expenses for their burial. Applauding the founders of the brotherhood, Phoni tis Kyprou called for the establishment of such organisations in the other quarters of the town.⁴¹⁴ Larnaca's Salpinx, commenting on the island-wide spread of poverty noted that every town ought to have a charitable organisation.⁴¹⁵

414. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), March 27/10, 1888.

415. Salpinx, "Ta evgeni aisthimata" (Noble sentiments), March 12, 1888.

Larnaca in fact boasted of the most efficient system of charity, undertaken by a committee of the town's respectable inhabitants. That was the only town whose population had actually been decreasing; as economic activity was diverted away to Limassol and Famagusta the number of Larnaca's inhabitants went from 7,833 in 1881 to 7,593 in 1891, a fall of 3.16%.⁴¹⁶ The paradox then arose of a town experiencing, in absolute terms, a decrease in population and an increase in what might have been described as a surplus population. The system of food distribution, which had been inaugurated just before Christmas 1887, provided meals three days a week to 60 paupers. Two months later their numbers had gone up to 300, swollen by paupers from Larnaca's hinterland. Moreover their dependence on charity had become total, since the committee was obliged to provide food on a daily basis.⁴¹⁷ Though the organisers were probably prompted by genuine Christian motives, the provision of charity had all the covering elements of prestige, subordination and obligation. All these were manifest in the funeral of Pierraki Themistocleous, one of the chief organisers of charity in the town, who was described by Phoni tis Kyprou as "a father of the poor". Upon his coffin, which was carried in a convoy of five coaches, one of the wreaths bore the inscription: "From the poor of Sotiros quarter to their protector".⁴¹⁸

416. Census, 1891, op. cit., p. 7.

417. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Kyrie syndacta" (Letter to the editor), March 27/10, 1888.

418. Ibid., "Larnax" (Larnaca), July, 3/15, 1890.

In the new economic and political environment the Church and landed interest made room for the successful entrepreneur, who was becoming the major claimant to public esteem. Money-lenders, though creating private wealth, were portrayed as contributors to the public good and thereby deserving corresponding recognition. Such are the sentiments displayed in a ballad of 1892, commemorating the death of a major representative of this class:

He was the bank [κράσι] of the poor, which is now sealed
and their hearts were hurt upon such news
A father and his two children owning a firm
holding in their hands the keys of all the villages
whenever I passed by I saw him in front of their safe
counting money to peasants as if they were almonds⁴¹⁹

The haughty bearing and conspicuous display of wealth by the deceased man were also accounted for by the bard:

When he came out in public he had the posture of a lion
being a rich man's son, and thus worthy of mourning
He was coming like a lord [λόρδος] in the bazaar
He wore his wristwatches and gold bracelets
when he rode on his horse the street trembled⁴²⁰

In the solemnity of these moments, big spending was fitting to the worship of the rich. Liberal offers to the poor upon the departure of a wealthy man, would keep potent the imagery of status and authority:

I hear his money is being distributed like kollyva*⁴²¹
so that people bless his memory as long as they live⁴²²

419. Kyriacos Anastasiou, Tragoudion tou Loizou Hadji Gavrielidou ek Lemissou (The song of Loizos Hadji Gavrielides from Limassol), Nicosia, 1892, p. 1.

420. Ibid., pp. 1-4.

421. * Boiled wheat offered in remembrance of a dead person.

422. Anastasiou, Tragoudion Gavrielidou, op. cit., p. 4.

they gave a lot of money to the poor and the chanters
and the monks and all the priests.⁴²³

The elaborate funerary arrangements, the numbers of marchers
and the attendance of other grandees, similarly demonstrated his
commanding authority in correspondingly pompous fashion:

His funeral procession, at the end of June,
was as big as the one held on Saint George's day⁴²⁴
All the Bishops are praying for his memory
Many bowed to the coffin in the Church of Trypiotis
And the Archbishop went along with the priests
all of them holding candles in their hands
Calvaris*⁴²⁵ himself delivered a funeral oration⁴²⁶

Deference to wealthy Greek Cypriots went hand in hand with
deference to the authorities. The Greek elite had after all
readily transferred their allegiance from the Turks to the
British. July 1887 was a Jubilee month and the Government, in
spite of the fact that the island was being tried severely by the
failed harvest, opened a list of donations toward the erection of
a memorial to Queen Victoria. The most substantial sum was given
by the Archbishop, followed by the church of Phaneromeni, the
monastery of Kykko and the greatest names in the Greek community
such as Pierides, Severis, Dianellos and Evangelides.⁴²⁷

423. Ibid., p. 5.

424. Ibid.

425. * The director of Nicosia's secondary school.

426. Anastasiou, Tragoudion Gavrielidou, op. cit., p. 7.

427. The Times of Cyprus, "Her Majesty's Jubilee", July 25,
1887.

The authorities in their turn, while extracting the maximum revenue possible out of an impotent populace, cultivated their own image of paternalism and undertook certain responsibilities, such as the distribution of seed corn to those in most distress. The Government's sway held more firmly over the very poor, who were most dependent on their rich compatriots and least influenced by the burgeoning national sentiment. In spite of their occasional, and formless, expressions of anger and frustration these poor were in fact politically docile and responsive to the Government's patronage. An opportunity for such gestures and charitable activities was given by the celebrations for Queen Victoria's jubilee, in the last week of June 1887. At the very time when the unprecedented crisis was well under way, and tax-collectors were seizing peasant and artisan property, liberal doles were offered to the poor all over the island. The centre of the celebrations had been Nicosia where plans were made for the entertainment of some 2,000 destitute and aged persons, some in public and others in their own homes.⁴²⁸ The feast was attended by the High Commissioner himself. Though round the year he would be protected by his officials from casual encounters this time he met the populace on his own terms, as clients for his favour. According to the Times of Cyprus, "he went the round of tables, taking much interest in all the numerous details".⁴²⁹ The feast

428. Ibid., June 20, 1887.

429. Ibid., June 27, 1887.

in Larnaca had also been calculated to exact appropriate deference. The Times of Cyprus reported that "crowds were waiting for the food that was at any rate to gladden their hearts for one day in the year". The English anthem was played during the distribution of food, in the precincts of Saint Lazarus church, to 200 poor and blind; "to each of them was distributed half an oke of meat, one loaf of bread, one oke of rice and three copper piastres, to drink to Her Most Gracious Majesty's health".⁴³⁰

430. Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

THE GROWING INDEPENDENCE OF LABOUR

I. Continuity and Change in Corporate Trades

The decomposition of Ottoman society, which had been inaugurated with the Tanzimat reforms, continued at a faster pace after the British occupation. This entailed the enlargement in the sector of the economy which was independent of a client relationship to the clergy, the landowning tax-farmers and the town merchants and manufacturers. During this transitional phase labouring people in general, whether skilled or unskilled, in town and country, were less situated in a position of dependence in earning a living than they had ever been before or than they were to be at the dawn of the 20th century and the introduction of the factory system in Cyprus.

Turkish monopoly of tanning, the last remnant of the corporate structures still upheld by the force of law, was now violated by Greek tradesmen. In early May 1879 a petition of protest by the Turkish tanners against Greek penetration of the trade was rejected by the British. The Acting Chief Secretary, Walter Holbach, instructed the Commissioner of Nicosia to reply as follows: "His Excellency does not wish to make any distinction between creeds and cannot allow any such privilege as that now asked for".⁴³¹ Turkish butchers kept their effective monopoly a little

431. SA1:1879/Box 6, Walter Holbach, Acting Chief Secretary, to R. Gordon, Commissioner of Nicosia, May 21, 1879.

longer by holding on to their shops, given that meat could only be sold from premises approved by the municipality. In 1888, upon the movement of these shops to another location in the market, the Greek President of the Municipal Commission changed an earlier decision for distributing the shops by ballot to those claiming membership of the butchers' guild. The shops were now put up for auction and let to the highest bidder, to the horror of the butchers. A petition to the High Commissioner protested, in vain:

The President of the Municipality, unlawfully by himself, has let our shops by public auction to strangers and apprentices who never had shops and who bear evil toward us...and we, being left out altogether,⁴³² it is evident that we have been treated unjustly.

The cash nexus was as disturbing to those locked in an estate view of the world, as it was corrosive when applied to the remnants of the Ottoman structures. Established loyalties were further undermined by market relations, just as communal values were eroded by individualist ones. In May 1885, Harry Thompson, Commissioner of Paphos, asked permission from the Chief Secretary to introduce subsidiary legislation for the payment of night-guards in the local bazaar. Thompson explained that though it had hitherto been the custom for each tradesman in the bazaar to con-

432. SA1:2617/1888, Hadji Hassan Aga Hadji, Head Butcher, to the High Commissioner, September 26, 1888.

tribute a sort of voluntary tax of 2s per month, toward the pay of night-guards, this money was now beginning to be collected with difficulty.⁴³³

Certain aspects of the new administration's policy could shake handicrafts and their organisations in ways hardly foreseen by colonial officials. In 1879, sensitivity with regard to the preservation of forests led to the enactment of Ordinance No. XXII. Apart from the predictable shepherds and gatherers of brushwood, a number of artisan trades were also adversely affected by the Ordinance. On July 2, 1881, a letter in the newspaper Alithia, signed by Philos tis Alithias (Friend of Truth), complained that the Principal Forest Officer, by placing restrictions on the cutting of wood, had ruined the syntekhniai of the woodcutters and of the limeworkers, who needed charcoal for their ovens. The syntekhnia of tanners had also been adversely affected by restrictions in the removal of pinebark, which was essential to the process of tanning.⁴³⁴

The most important link between syntekhniai and the state, in the allocation of taxation to tradesmen, was eliminated by the Government's determination to bypass these bodies and reach directly for each individual taxpayer. This policy raised protests from tradesmen associations which still had some vigour

433. SA1:1990/1885, Harry Thompson, Commissioner of Paphos, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, May 6, 1885.

434. Alithia, "To Tmima tis Dasonomias" (The Forestry Department), July 2, 1881.

at the time of the occupation. Such, were the syntekhniai in the craftsmen communities of Kaimakli and Pallouriotissa, where all inhabitants worked in masonry and carpentry and the village commission was virtually identical to the syntekhnia. On December 26, 1882, a petition was addressed to the High Commissioner by five masons, headed by one Therapos Hadjiloizo, as representatives of the masons of these two villages. The petitioners protested that a committee appointed by the Government had imposed a heavy tax on the corporation of masons without having consulted the commissions of the two villages. Neither had the committee called the head-mason, "who was in state to manifest the position of each one".⁴³⁵ The Government's reply simply noted that those who did not agree with their tax assessment could appeal, individually, to the committee. Yet, though an activity as significant as the assessment of taxes was taken away, the corporation as such did not become defunct. A year later, November 30, 1883, another petition against heavy taxation was sent to the High Commissioner by 107 masons of Kaimakli, Pallouriotissa, Strovolo and Omorphita. Though this text did not now mention the corporation, the long list of names was still headed by the head-mason, Therapos Hadjiloizo.⁴³⁶

435. SA1:9199, Therapos Hadjiloizo and five others to the High Commissioner, December 26, 1882.

436. SA1:10789, Therapos Hadjiloizo and others to the High Commissioner, November 30, 1883.

In traditional craft-communities, divisions of rank were more resilient over time than anywhere else. Kaimakli master-masons were known to be distinguished by the fact that they rode on mules, in contrast to their journeymen who moved about on foot.⁴³⁷ The master's physical ascendancy gave him his air of power and seeming superiority; both literally and metaphorically, artisans and apprentices had to look up to their employer and master. Though the Ottoman framework had been eliminated, the predominance of established master-tradesmen, who were major employers of labour, was generally acknowledged. Their influence was enhanced by the lack of any institutions for technical education. In isolated rural communities, where only one individual possessed the skills of the craft, such skills were only passed to another member of the family.⁴³⁸ In towns master-craftsmen parted dearly with their craft expertise, and then only by mutual understanding. On April 11, 1889, the Times of Cyprus reported that the mastoris of Kaimakli were indignant at the supersession of free labour by that of convicts in the building of a hospital:

437. Protopapa, Kaimakli, op. cit., p. 13.

438. The oral testimony of Antoni Stratouras (Saddlemaker), from Neo Khorio Kythreas, is one of the earliest available. Born in 1892 he learnt the manufacture of stratouria (saddles) from his father who had also been introduced to the trade by his father (Georghios Hadjigeorghiou, "Kyprioi kheirotekhnes" (Cypriot craftsmen), Laographiki Kypros (Cyprus Folklore), No. 2, 1971, p. 75).

"They are further specially annoyed because one of them is disloyal enough to engage in the task of teaching convicts the masons' craft".⁴³⁹ Dr. Costas Kyrris wrote of such norms in the passing of musical skills, holding well into the 20th century:

Μαστοπάντζα was a very difficult tune performed by a student-violinist before a committee of master-violinists (μάστοροι), who were organized into a sort of "guild" (λόνάφιν). Only after a successful performance of that tune was the candidate entitled to join their "guild".⁴⁴⁰

In fields of social and professional intercourse which were not catered for by new legislation, daily life went on being regulated by the practices which had evolved during Ottoman rule. Up until the end of the century, no craftsman would set up shop in a street that was considered the domain of a different trade, though esnaf restrictions no longer applied.⁴⁴¹ Municipal authorities continued for years to supplement their revenue by levying their traditional dues on the various trades, in spite of the fact that this practice was not catered for by colonial legislation. On August 22, 1882 the President of the Municipal Council of Famagusta officially notified the District Commissioner that "the new Municipal Council had approved the decisions

439. The Times of Cyprus, April 11, 1889.

440. Costas Kyrris, "Σταπάτορος = [Πρωτοσ]τάτωρ, or strator: A Military Institution in XVth Century Cyprus", Epetiris Etairias Vyzandinon Spoudon (Annual Review of the Society of Byzantine Studies), Year XXXIII [ΑΓ'], Athens, 1968, p. 123.

In the title and passage, the Greek terms used are Dr. Kyrris' own.

441. Michaelidou, Khora, op. cit., p. 155.

of the previous Council regarding payment of municipal taxes by all the syntekhniai [περί πληρωμής δημοτικού φόρου παρ' όλων των συντεχνιών]".⁴⁴² In Kyrenia, the Municipal Council used similar terminology. A resolution dealing with the list of trade rates for the years 1883-1884, considered that "it would be reasonable that the shillings and piastres listed above for the trades, i.e. for the esnafs, [των επαγγελματιών, ήτη εσναφίων] should be paid to the municipality".⁴⁴³ Even though other municipal authorities did not use the terms "syntekhnia" or "esnaf" when issuing lists for trade rates, the content and spirit of these lists were not different from those issued by the Municipal Councils of Famagusta and Kyrenia.

The leaders of syntekhniai, having retained a degree of the standing they had enjoyed during the Ottoman period, were visible in public affairs. In December 1886, the syntekhniai of Larnaca were, as an institution, represented at the funeral of the Bishop of Kition, where in a long procession of 22 wreaths, their wreath was placed third.⁴⁴⁴ Such public ceremonies were indicative of the ranking still enjoyed by these aristocratic plebeians, with regard to the rest of the orders of Cypriot society. On November

442. SA1:7763, Soteris Emphiedjis, President of Famagusta Municipal Council, to Arthur Young, Commissioner of Famagusta District, August 22, 1882.

443. SA1:551/1884, Leaflet of the catalogue of craftsmen e.t.c. within the boundaries of the municipality of Kyrenia.

444. See the description of the ceremony in Salpinx, "Ta peri kidias" (On the funeral ceremony), December 27/9, 1886.

3, 1888, during the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of King George of the Greeks, the organising committee in Nicosia extended an official invitation to

the President and the Christian members of the Municipal Council of the capital, the members of the Legislative Council of the Nicosia-Kyrenia constituency, the managers of the banks, the heads of the syntekhniai and in general the entire Christian population of the capital and the suburbs...⁴⁴⁵

During the early years of British rule, the status of an apprentice vis à vis his master was not very different from what it had been during the Ottoman period. Given the tender age at which he entered the trade and having been given little, if any, chance to gain the rudiments of reading and writing, the apprentice or journeyman would obey his master and be closely dependent on him in the matter of ideas and attitudes. This was exemplified in an exchange through the columns of two newspapers, where one person was called kopelli (lad), literally meaning a young henchman, and was paralleled to a kalfas and a cirağ.⁴⁴⁶ The employee would thereafter be expected to refer with reverence to his old master, even after he had set up a shop himself; at times, he would even adopt the surname of his master, though more often he would be named after his trade. A study on Cypriot surnames recorded 103 of them directly originating from traditional crafts.⁴⁴⁷

445. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Programma eortasmon" (Programme of celebrations), November 22/3, 1888.

446. Enosis, "Enghoria" (Internal affairs), August 9/21, 1886.

447. Andreas. M. Kolitsis, Peri ton kyrion onomaton kai ton eponimon ton Kyprion (On the christian names and surnames of Cypriots), Athens, 1964, pp. 76-79.

Esnaf or no esnaf therefore, the world of manufacture remained a hand-made one. Until the dawn of the 20th century the scale and speed of work, were determined by what men and women would produce with hand tools and without power-driven machinery. The resilience of existing techniques of production and exchange, meant that in spite of the elimination of esnaf structures, there was no crisis in the traditional patterns of manufacture. A class of industrial proletarians, alienated from the products of their labour, was not to appear until World War I. The weakening of paternalist values however, made for a harsher relationship in the workshop, tending toward that of an employer and his employee. According to a description of the barrel-makers' trade, on Limassol's waterfront, master-craftsmen "chopped wood, carved metal and yelled and swore at the young apprentices, causing a pandemonium which began at seven in the morning and ended late in the afternoon..."⁴⁴⁸ Despite the fact that his sheer workload was vital for the operation of the trade and the welfare of the master's family, the apprentice, underpaid or unpaid, underfed, overworked and ill-treated would still not dare raise his head but would stoically conform to his station. The weight of the lad's family was brought to bear in the master's favour, whose offer of an apprenticeship was regarded as an act of generosity. Hence the vernacular phrase by the father, in donating his son to

448. Agni Michaelidou, Lemesos, i palia politia (The old town of Limassol), Nicosia, 1981, p. 136.

the master-craftsman: "Take him master, the flesh is yours, the bones are mine" (That is, the master's powers over the lad were only short of life and death).⁴⁴⁹ The nature and quality of working life, indicating a relation of roughness and domination rather than filial paternalism, are described in a passage from a short story in the Limassol newspaper Alithia, in October 1897, nearly 20 years into British rule:

The chief master, sitting on a high coarsely made stool...leaned backwards every now and then to give sharp commands to his journeymen and occasionally to light a cigarette from the fire of his chimney. A journeyman, with his face completely blackened, drilled holes on a lock with a large gimlet. Next to him a blind man fanned the furnace with a large pair of hand-bellows.⁴⁵⁰

II. The Weakening of Client Relationships

At the outset of colonial rule, the power of the Church, was still quite significant. In rural areas in particular, the parish clergy were capable of exercising their influence on a considerable section of the labouring strata. The editor of Neon Kitium, commenting on the Bishop of Kitium's source of support in the election of 1883, pointed out that in the village of Aigialoussa alone, on the Carpas, there were 27 priests. Their sum total might be worked out from the number of villages and

449. Traces of this relationship survived as late as the 1920s. See the sad recollections of Haris Neocli, Lambros Masias and Yianis Orphanos in an article titled "To megalo xekinima" (The great beginning), in the left-wing newspaper Haravgi, August 28, 1976.

450. Alithia, "O sideras" (The blacksmith), October 16, 1897.

towns in the constituency in which the Bishop was a candidate; adding to these the votes of the sons of married priests, one could get the overall picture of his electoral appeal.⁴⁵¹ A single voter could show preference to three candidates; in electoral contests where a seat was, on average, worth no more than 1,900 votes clerical influence could be decisive in tilting the balance in favour of candidates who were clergymen or were approved by the clergy. Larnaca's newspaper, Neon Kition, referred to the Bishop of Kitium's supporters in the 1883 election as "drones in monasteries or metropolis, teachers worth two a penny, chanters, deacons and vergers".⁴⁵² This reliable block of supporters was, in the circumstances of the period, the only network of political activity and electoral coordination. The Church's economic influence was also brought to bear in electoral contests. Philios Zannetos, historian and politician, gave his own experience of the situation:

From old times the tenants of the numerous shops belonging to the church of Phaneromeni and the monastery of Kykko, in the bazaar of Nicosia, had to obey the party. If they refused to do so, they were forced to leave or to pay exorbitant rents. The same thing happened during the leasing out of the archbishopric's lands all over the archdiocese. Similar measures were also applied to the schools...⁴⁵³

451. Neon Kition, "Graphousin imin ek Varosion" (A letter from Famagusta), September 3/15, 1883.

452. Ibid., "I proti en Kypro psifoforia" (The first ballot in Cyprus), June 4/10, 1883.

453. Zannetos, Historia, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 317.

Yet, the whole system of the Church was already declining. From the middle of the 19th century, the number of young men joining the clergy, as monks or priests, had been decreasing steadily, and inversely to the improving situation of lay Greeks, consequent upon the Tanzimat reforms. Taking the monastery of Kykko as the most well-documented instance, Hackett pointed to a steady decline in the number of residents during the closing years of Ottoman rule.⁴⁵⁴ Philipos Georghiou (1875) also noted that since the time of the Greek revolution certain monasteries had been facing financial difficulties; at the time of writing Chrysoroyiatissa and Trooditissa were, for lack of funds, in a state of decline.⁴⁵⁵ The British occupation, which finally put an end to the Millet system and discrimination against lay Greeks, and slashed the income of the Church by two thirds, contributed decisively to the fall in the overall number of poor dependant on the Prelates. Apart from taxing clerical and monastic establishments the British also treated members of the clergy as taxable individuals; on November 15, 1878, High Commissioner Wolseley noted in his diary:

The beggars of priests and monks have hitherto enjoyed an immunity from taxation not borne out by any law and I am shortly to have a tussle with them on the subject, for I mean them to pay taxes like everyone else.⁴⁵⁶

454. Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 330.

455. Georghiou, Eidiseis, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

456. Cavendish, Wolseley, op. cit., p. 145.

Chrysoroyiatissa was one of the monasteries which were severely tried by the circumstances created by the British occupation. Considerable tracts of land, which had been disputed by the peasants of neighbouring villages [φιλονικούμενα χωράφια], were lost to the monastery. Following the monastery's bankruptcy, the Court of Appeal ruled, on May 2, 1883, that part of its property be executed for payment of debts. The Abbot was forced to make more loans by mortgaging the rest of the monastery's estates; he could not however avoid the humiliation of having to sell property, such as the church of Ayia Triada in Limassol, toward paying part of the debt.⁴⁵⁷ Even Kykko was not spared from the decline. Hackett writing in 1900, noted that since the times of Sakellarios (1855) the number of people living in the monastery had diminished considerably.⁴⁵⁸ The same held true for the overall number of clergymen, which was estimated at 1700 in 1853. According to the Church's return of 1891 this number stood between 862 and 912, registering a decrease of more 50%. In the census return of 1891, the total number of clergymen, represented as 505, indicated an even greater decrease, at 65%.⁴⁵⁹ Clerical and monastic life was thereafter rendered a less attractive

457. Loizos Philippou, I iera moni Chrysoroyiatissis (The holy monastery of Chrysoroyiatissa), Paphos, 1934, pp. 21-22.

458. Hackett, History, op. cit., p. 339.

459. Ibid., p. 268.

prospect. Writing in 1910, A. Ohnefalsch-Richter observed that monks and priests had by then become the ones who moaned and complained that the good times were a thing of the past.⁴⁶⁰

The early years of colonial rule also witnessed the virtual demise of the vestiges of the Ottoman land regime. Çiftlik, Vâkıf and Church lands were being besieged by a mass of poor peasants whose rights of usage and occupation were gradually hardening into rights of ownership. The aforementioned dispute between the people of Emba village and the Bishop of Paphos, over the payment of canonica, was a test case in this respect. On April 16, 1879, A. G. Wauchope, Commissioner of Paphos, wrote to the Chief Secretary: "The case which I enclose is a very important one. On it depends very much what the income of the Greek Church will be in the future". Given that the Bishop had produced a ferman entitling him to collect his dues, the court ruled that the people ought to continue payments for cultivating the village lands. Where, however, the Bishop had annually been exacting a sum of 1,000 piastres, the court ruled that the villagers should pay only 100.⁴⁶¹ The ruling, which was accepted by the villagers, had cut the Bishop's income by 9/10, and his prestige by as much.⁴⁶²

460. Ohnefalsch-Richter (Marangou), Hellinika, op. cit., p. 60.

461. SA1:Box 4/1878, Wauchope to Greaves, April 16, 1879.

462. The Commissioner described the Bishop as furious, laid up with fever and planning to retire (Ibid., May 1, 1879).

The Church might be able to afford the expenses of more such litigation but not the poisoning of relations between clergy and parishioners, for such mediocre returns.

Generally the elimination of the clergy's privileges in administration and taxation considerably eased the hitherto subservient position of the labouring poor. Their refusal to pay their, now, voluntary dues was in itself a sign of independence. Sir Samuel Baker, a visitor to Cyprus in 1879, noted on the novel attitude of the humble toward the clergy:

I have myself witnessed an altercation between the monks and shepherds on the mountains upon a question of cheeses and goats, which the former claimed as annually due to the monastery; it appeared that prior to the British occupation they had been able by threats to extort this demand, but the shepherds are now determined to free themselves from all payments beyond which the law compelled, and they resisted the priestly authority, before which they had hitherto remained as slaves. This spirit of independence that has so quickly developed by the equity of British rule will probably extend...⁴⁶³

From the outset of British rule, whenever a dispute arose between the peasant's right to own his land and the remnants of Ottoman feudalism associated with çiftliks and religious establishments, the latter, one way or the other, gave way. In 1885, a judgement of the Supreme Court, in a case where a landowner tried to dispossess peasants who had possessed and cultivated, for more than ten years, land registered as belonging to his çiftlik, laid down that possession and cultivation for ten years gave the peasants right of ownership, even against a registered title. The

463. Baker, Cyprus, op. cit., p. 363.

High Commissioner observed that this ruling upset previous opinion, that such claim could be valid only when the owner was not registered. Much çiftlik land had been cultivated by villagers for many years and time would, by virtue of the judgement, confer an indisputable right to such land. The problem was accentuated by the fact that the area, so cultivated, was constantly expanding while the boundaries of çiftliks were not accurately defined.⁴⁶⁴ Several çiftlik owners were absentee landlords, who resided in towns or even in Turkey, and took no interest other than collect their ground-rent. In cases such as those of Kouklia çiftlik in Paphos and Abdullah Bey's estates in the Carpas, arrangements were made by which the Government collected the tithe and paid it to the owners after deducting certain charges.⁴⁶⁵ The status of the cultivators, who were left undisturbed on the land, was in effect not distinguishable from that of their counterparts on Mîrî land.

The situation was not more favourable for the other major landowner in the island, the Evkaf. Once it became clear that Evkaf finances would be scrutinized, some trustees began to dispose of their estates by selling them to the peasant occupiers. One such case had been Kolossi çiftlik in the district of Limassol which enclosed the Greek villages of Lophou and Erimi. During Ot-

464. CO 67/38, Sir Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Lord Derby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, June 24, 1885.

465. See specifically CO 67/60, Sir Robert Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 16, 1889.

toman rule, the ciftlik had been sublet to the family of Apostolides, Greek merchant landowners from Limassol, who had been collecting the icaret, the rent charge paid by peasant cultivators. Between 1879 and 1881, these peasants purchased from the Apostolides family the land they cultivated and received registered titles to their plots. In the meantime, according to the High Commissioner's reporting to the Secretary of State, the Evkaf central office in Nicosia continued to demand the icaret from the Apostolides family, "receiving in return, sometimes promises which resulted in nothing, and sometimes disclaimers of liability". In 1891, the British delegate of the Evkaf, demanding a return of the land, finally took the case to court, where it was revealed that certain Turkish trustees had, twelve years earlier, known and approved of the sales. What had happened to the money was better known between them and the Apostolideses. Though the case dragged on in the courts, the issue was in effect decided by the political stand adopted by the Government. The High Commissioner reported to London his reluctance to tamper

with the continued occupation of their holdings by the persons (about 40 in number) who have been for years in possession, under the circumstances already detailed above. Steps would then be taken to evict these people, and I had to consider the position in which the Government would be placed, should it become necessary to employ force in order to effect their eviction.⁴⁶⁶

466. CO 67/76, Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 8, 1892.

By the 1890s the last vestiges of Ottoman feudalism in land had in practice been eliminated, through a process of decline which had been going on for more than half a century. Dr. Paul Sant Cassia has estimated that in 1844, large estates (Eykaf, Church and çiftlik land) amounted to 23.3% of a total of 180,000 acres of land under cultivation.⁴⁶⁷ Thereafter, though the area covered by these estates increased, their relative significance diminished because of the much more rapid expansion of land under cultivation, which was after the Tanzimat reforms, mostly taken over by independent peasants. Under British rule, the further expansion of agricultural land and the continuous subdivision between heirs, in the case of privately owned çiftliks, contributed to the further diminution of the share of large landed property. By the time of the General Survey of 1909-1929 out of a total of 1,390,000 acres of agricultural land only 7.5% (97,000 acres) belonged to large estates.⁴⁶⁸

Regarding the other major group of living-in labourers, the mistarkoi, though statistical material on their numbers is lacking, available evidence points to a steady decline. This had, as in the case of postulants in monasteries, been caused by the overall improvement in the position of the Greeks, first as reayas and later as colonial subjects. Another reason had been the further development of monoculture, cereal production in par-

467. Sant Cassia, "Religion", op. cit., p. 10.

468. Christodoulou, Land Use, op. cit., p. 74.

ticular, which maximised the fluctuations of labour demand during the year. At the time of the occupation, even in highland pastures and in the most backward district of Paphos, where more traces of the old Ottoman system survived, labourers employed for the day or the task, outnumbered the mistarkoi.⁴⁶⁹

The first signs of unemployment contributed to the further decline of service, which shaded imperceptibly into forms of seasonal or weekly labour, and could in practice be very flexible in order to comply with regional agricultural specialisations. During the early 1880s landowners saw no necessity to hire their agricultural labourers by the year, when they could get plenty of them by the week. Living-in also declined as a consequence of rising prices, especially in food, which made payment in kind a less preferable proposition. Payment in wages in fact, had the effect of forcing labourers to buy produce on the market, so intensifying demand and further accentuating price, to the greater profitability of the çiftlik owner. In February 1886, the Cyprus Herald reported of acute distress in Paphos and added: "At Polis Chrysochou any number of labourers can be procured at the rate of sixpence a day, while bread is double the price it was this time last year".⁴⁷⁰ The mistarkoi suffered bitterly from the unemployment consequent upon the rural crisis of 1887. Phoni tis Kyprou,

469. See SA1:1878/Box 4, WP/66, A. G. Wauchope, Civil Commissioner of Paphos, to G. R. Greaves, Chief Secretary, September 2, 1878.

470. The Cyprus Herald, "The distress at Paphos", February 13, 1886.

reported in early spring:

The drought is still prevalent and misery is knocking at the door of every Cypriot. Very large numbers of peasants have arrived, coming from several villages of the island. They have no food or clothing and are asking for work.⁴⁷¹

Rising prices made even more of these poor vulnerable to unemployment. In February 1888, the Times of Cyprus expressed wonder at the fact that provisions had become so much dearer than they were at the same month of the previous year. Beef had gone up from 5 c.p. an oke to 9 c.p., mutton from 7 c.p. to 10-12 c.p. and lamb from 8-9 c.p. to 12-13 c.p.⁴⁷² Throughout the duration of the crisis, ciftlik owners were naturally induced to prefer payment in wages and thus displace the burden of inflation on their labourers. By the turn of the century, mistarkoi in any numbers were employed only by the very large landowners, engaging in a multitude of agricultural and pastoral activities. The employment of living-in labour was in fact an indication of their economic prowess.⁴⁷³

Given that the transition from mistarkoi to seasonal, and even day labour, was a very gradual process, labour relations during the harvest season retained most paternal features of living-in. Folklore studies on threshing, point to the idyllic

471. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), March 14, 1887.

472. The Times of Cyprus, February 6, 1888.

473. See the references to the two greatest merchant landowners in the village of Lyssi in Xystouris, Lyssi, op. cit., pp. 52 and 55.

aspects of the relationship between the peasant employer and his seasonal employees. The harvest was indeed wrapped up in an entire body of custom. Threshers, wielding their individually-owned ornamented scythes, would view their task much as a performance, singing and literally playing games while on the job.⁴⁷⁴ Part of the payment was made in perquisites, the peasant allowing the threshers the produce from the last corner of the field, after a ritual dance had been performed by the male members of the gang. Finally, the peasant's obligation toward the threshers included feeding them; the task, in the context of an extended household, would be assigned to his wife and daughters.⁴⁷⁵

However, in spite of these folklore elements, the essence of the transaction lay elsewhere; though the harvest was an essentially communal activity the local inhabitants were not capable of supplying between themselves the total labour required and had to supplement it with outsiders. Gangs of threshers from the mountainous, and poorer, regions of Paphos, Tillyria and the Car-

474. The most well-known harvest song, O pragmateftis (The pedlar), was full of romantic stanzas and totally devoid of any notion of class, though the rhyme seems to have been conducive in ensuring regularity of movement and thereby conservation of energy. For a selection of variations of this harvest song see Menelaos Christodoulou ed., Kypriaka dimodi asmata (Cyprus folk songs), Vol. 1, Nicosia, 1987, pp. 889-893. For a description of the traditional harvest game, "The hare and the hunter" see G. C. Papacharalambous, Kypriaka ithi kai ethima (Customs and manners of Cyprus), Nicosia, 1965, pp. 199-201.

475. Ibid., pp. 201-214.

pas, travelled to the lowlands of Mesaoria and Morphou to be recruited by the peasant landowners, in the fairs of the harvest period.⁴⁷⁶ During these two months, a labour market could be said to exist in the island; threshers could then face peasant employers on roughly equal terms and the harvest contract would be in the nature of a bargain. The labouring poor, who lived in harsh conditions, away from home, for several weeks and even months, in order to eke out their meagre living, enjoyed the right of choosing and changing their masters.

The independence of labour was also enhanced by the multitude of trades practised by a very substantial portion of the population. This was reflected in the difficulties faced by the colonial authorities in enumerating occupations, during the compilation of the first census carried out in the island in 1881. Though the authorities had been able to collect, in the form of schedule, basic items such as sex, age and religion, the difficulties at classifying information with regard to occupations were such that the task had to be abandoned.⁴⁷⁷ In the compilation of the next census, in 1891, though a decade of expropriation of smallholders and traders had elapsed, these difficulties remained quite formidable. Many people were engaged in different

476. See Kanthos, Kathimerini, op. cit., p. 215.

477. Census 1881, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

occupations at different times of the year and the filling up of such a column in the schedule would, according to the Assistant Chief Secretary, be extremely unreliable:

For instance a great proportion of the agricultural population of Cyprus consists of persons who own but small plots of land, sufficiently large to wholly occupy their time at certain periods a year, but who at other periods of the year either migrate to a town, for work on some trade or become muleteers, cart-drivers, labourers taking up whatever occupation comes the handiest to them.⁴⁷⁸

Many of the labouring poor's economic dealings were still carried out with people whose economic status was roughly equal. A multitude of petty traders and smallholders came together, as producers and consumers, in local markets and in seasonal fairs, known as paneyiria. Captain Wauchope, Commissioner of Paphos, reported in August 1878, that the population attended the paneyiria in order to buy and sell all kinds of merchandise: "Horses, cattle, cloths, shirts, cotton, all manufactured goods & productions of the country, as well as edibles of all kinds".⁴⁷⁹ The growth of the economy, the development of the road system and the spread of economic activity away from the traditional trading connection between Nicosia and Larnaca countered the hardening of

478. SA1:3318/1890, George Smith, Assistant Chief Secretary, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, November 27, 1890.

A return of occupations was eventually compiled. F. G. Glosop, Superintendent of Census, qualified his Department's findings by noting that in Cyprus the difficulties of obtaining accurate returns of occupation were greater than in most places (Census 1891, op. cit., p. 11).

479. SA1:1878/Box 1, A. G. Wauchope, Civil Commissioner of Paphos, to G. R. Greaves, Chief Secretary, Chief of Staff Head Quarters, August 29, 1878.

marketing networks, which limited the independence of peasants and petty tradesmen. By 1886, eight years into the occupation, the Commissioner of Larnaca noted on the impact of this expansion and decentralisation:

Our carobs are shipped at Zygi, our wine goes to Limassol. The small traders of Nicosia, Kyrenia and Famagusta, who formerly bought their stocks in Larnaca, now correspond directly with England and the continent. The villagers have grown richer and more independent; they hold their grain, or sell it where and when they choose. They ask higher prices for articles of food - poultry, eggs, game, fruit...⁴⁸⁰

Women were also being drawn into the effort to uphold the family's monetary income. Mainstream folklore studies associate the traditional Cypriot handloom with girls preparing their dowries. Yet pressure from tax-collectors and money-lenders on poor households, must be the reason why the 3,424 weavers recorded in 1891 had by 1901 nearly doubled to 6,011.⁴⁸¹ An entire bazaar was in fact devoted to women and was accorded a vivid description by a visitor in 1894:

Nothing could be more amusing than to wander about the Nicosia bazaars, especially on a Friday, which is the market day, when the women, having arrived from the environs on mules and donkeys innumerable, sit on the ground surrounded by their bales of home-spun and home-woven silks, gauzes, cottons and crepons, muslin handkerchiefs, embroidered with gold or edged with a hand-worked silk-lace; bead purses, embroidered bags and jackets and all sorts of small articles.⁴⁸²

480. SA1:3116/1886, C. D. Cobham to Chief Secretary, August 19, 1886.

481. See Census 1891, op. cit., p. 50 and Cyprus - Report and General Abstract of the Census of 1901, Nicosia, 1902, p. 55.

482. Elizabeth Lewis, A Lady's Impressions on Cyprus, 1893, London, 1894, p. 194.

The fact that property, even if petty, was widespread ensured subsistence and enhanced independence. To a certain extent this held true even for the paupers of the time, many of whom did not have to rely on the Church, but were instead provided for, through the generosity of ordinary folk. In a report on Cyprus for the period 1854-1858, the British Consul in Rhodes wrote on the condition of the very poor:

There is probably no country where living is so easy as at Cyprus. It is sufficient to say, that the beggars, who generally are blind, maimed, or worn out by age, and have mostly a small house of their own, are able to live quietly at home, without begging more than one or two days at most of the week.⁴⁸³

The situation had hardly changed by 1878, causing foreign visitors to note the contrast between the poor of Cyprus and the paupers of Europe. Photographer John Thomson, who had, in the wake of the British occupation, been the first to capture in pictures the lives of the local population, commented on his encounter with a woman asking for alms:

Mendicity is not an art practised to any great extent in Cyprus and bahsis is a word as yet happily unknown among the islanders. There are, however, a few lepers near Nicosia who live partly by begging and partly on the bounty of the Greek clergy...But a healthy mendicant is so rare a sight in the towns that it was only by accident that I fell in with this type of her class.⁴⁸⁴

483. Cited in Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., "Translation of a General Report forwarded by Mr. Campbell, British Consul General at Rhodes, upon the Island of Cyprus, for the years 1854-5-6-7-8", p. 65.

484. John Thomson, Through Cyprus with a Camera in the Autumn of 1878, London, 1879, p. 19.

In an island where charity had been enshrined in custom since time immemorial, gleaning was a common means of relief. The harvest was therefore eagerly awaited by landholders, threshers and paupers alike. Hazel-nuts and almonds were gleaned after the harvest in August and carobs in September. Gleaning for olives, which during autumn gave several harvests, could be extended as late as Christmas. The major source of food for rural paupers was the cereal harvest, barley in May and wheat in June. The very old or physically-infirm, who could not glean in the fields, were allowed to collect their share of grain from the threshing floor.⁴⁸⁵

An additional factor enhancing the independence of the labouring poor was the fact that they had never been shaken off from the land. According to Consul White's report of 1863, in the central plain of Mesaoria a few peasants held from 225 to 375 acres, a large proportion of the whole, from 75 to 225 acres, whilst very few held as little as 10 acres.⁴⁸⁶ The fact that in Cyprus 40-50 acres could be considered as the minimum size that

485. For this custom see generally:

a) Archimandrite Leondios Hadjicostas, "Pongourdjidēs i Pongloyiarides" (Gleaning and gleaners), Laographiki Kypros, No. 14-15, 1975, pp. 61-63.

b) Andreas Gavriel, "Pongloyia-Pongoura" (Ears of corn left over), ibid., No. 16-17-18, 1976, p. 79.

486. Papadopoulos, Proxenika, op. cit., Consul White's Report, p. 297.

could support a family, indicates that the scraps of land belonging to the stratum of village poor, who made up the rural labour force, were sufficient to save them from utter destitution.⁴⁸⁷ The predominance of petty landownership indicated in turn that labour was a scarce commodity, costing considerably more than in other regions of the Ottoman Empire. In 1863, during the harvest period, daily wages paid to agricultural labourers in Salonica and Jannina were on average 4.5 piastres. In Cyprus the corresponding figure would rise up to 10 piastres, the highest recorded in the Empire for that year.⁴⁸⁸ In a well-researched memorandum in 1882 a Colonial Office clerk, Edward Fairfield, pointed to the significance of the fact that Cyprus was a society of smallholders:

Poor as is the population, according to our standards, property is so widely distributed that pauperism can hardly be said to exist. There are few persons supported by charity in the towns, and blind people are recognised as being entitled to support; but putting aside these people the country is without beggars...⁴⁸⁹

487. According to Professor Ross (1845), a peasant family living very frugally could maintain themselves with 40 to 50 scalas (donum) of grain and 20 scalas of cotton or tobacco, which could be grown as cash crops (One acre is approximately equal to three scalas). If the land were unwatered, which was the case over most of the island, the family would need twice the amount of land (Ross, Journey, op. cit., p. 46).

488. For an exposition of daily wages in different provinces of the Empire see Charles Issawi, "Wages in Turkey: 1850-1914", Osman Okyar and Halil Inalcik eds., Social and Economic History of Turkey (1071-1920), Ankara, 1980, pp. 268-270.

489. [C.-3661], Fairfield Memorandum, op. cit., p. 49.

III. An Undisciplined Labour Force

Finally there was the people's own mind toward work and pay, which often baffled the island's new masters, schooled in the most advanced economy of the time. The Cypriot poor were still a pre-industrial work force with an undeveloped division of labour. Their regularity and rhythm of work was moulded by such factors as a manifold variety of productive tasks, changes in the weather or even simple human inclination for leisure. Writing on the people of Paphos, only two months into the British occupation, Commissioner Wauchope singled idleness as their worst fault and noted that though they were very poor, they were content to scrape together enough to keep body and soul together. The British had thus been failing to induce Cypriots to be employed as domestic servants:

We have offered 6, 7 & 8 piastres per day for a month but until yesterday we were unsuccessful in getting anybody; at the same time the bazaar is always crowded with sturdy well-to-do looking men doing nothing. They won't work unless they are forced.

Finding labour for employment by the day was as difficult. The Commissioner added that he could not get mules with attendants: "Not that the remuneration is insufficient, just double what it has ever been before, but because the men hate a steady continuous work of from 8 to 10 hours".⁴⁹⁰

490. SA1:1878/Box 1, WP/138, A. G. Wauchope, Civil Commissioner of Paphos, "Report on the Character of the People in this District", August 21, 1878.

The British failed to see that a fundamental characteristic of this behaviour was the fact that these poor were in control of their own working lives. Their response to material incentives was guided by their own notions of comfort and limited by what was thought as appropriate to their station. Echoing the incompatibility of the moral pre-capitalist era with the rational economy of the present, the Commissioner of Kyrenia reported to the Chief Secretary on January 27, 1881:

It is true that complaints of poverty are frequent, but as a matter of fact, any man who is able and willing to work can easily gain 1s. or at least 9d. a day. Although the sum appears to be small, it must be remembered that a Cypriot can feed himself well, according to his ideas, from 4d. to 5d. a day. Unfortunately, however, although the demand for labour exceeds the supply, a great number of men, as soon as they have made sufficient money to provide for themselves with such food as is absolutely necessary and a few paras to spend on tobacco and coffee, refuse to work again until they have spent their last coin.⁴⁹¹

Contentment in their frugal style of life enhanced the poor's capacity to maintain a considerable degree of their independence and to keep at bay any employer, including the Government. Instead of the people asking for work, the British found themselves short of working-hands and unable to fulfil their public work schemes. "I despair of having these most necessary works carried out", wrote the High Commissioner, "unless I am allowed to enforce labour being furnished at good rates of pay..."⁴⁹²

491. [C.-3092], op. cit., "Report by Andrew Scott-Stevenson, Commissioner of Kyrenia, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary", January 27, 1881, p. 41.

492. [C.-2326], Correspondence Respecting an Ordinance enacted in Cyprus Providing for the Execution of Public Works,

Appropriate legislation was enacted within the next two months. According to "The Labour on Public Works Ordinance, 1878" local authorities had to prepare a list of all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 for the purpose of providing labour for public works.⁴⁹³ Eventually forcible requisition in Cyprus, became the subject of a debate in the House of Commons. On March 24, 1879, Sir Charles Dilke, Member for Chelsea, tabled eight questions, the first two of which dealt with forced labour and flogging in Cyprus.⁴⁹⁴ Robert Bourke, Under Secretary of State to the Foreign Office, defended the administration's practices in employing not "forced labour" but "statute labour" and added that there was nothing in the shape of personal coercion in Cyprus.⁴⁹⁵ On the same issue however W. E. Forster, member for Bradford, and a Quaker himself, pointed out that he was certain the Ordinance was being enforced with personal coercion. In Forster's view the system was condemned by a few words quoted from Wolseley's despatch - "It was not intended to put the system in force, if labour could be obtained in the open market".⁴⁹⁶ On June 1, 1880, the debate was renewed in the Commons. Peter Rylands, member for

 Sir Garnet Wolseley to the Marquis of Salisbury, September 29, 1878, (London, 1879), p. 1.

493. Ibid., Enclosure No.5, pp. 2-3.

494. Parliamentary Debates, Volume 244, March 24, 1879, Columns 1512-1513.

495. Ibid., Columns 1522-1523.

496. Ibid., Columns 1538-1539.

Burnley, argued that labour was being enforced in Cyprus in a manner which dragged the administration into disgrace and documented his opinion by reading to the House an extract from a book by the wife of the Commissioner for Kyrenia:

We met gangs at work - men, women, and boys who are paid a shilling, ninepence, and sixpence a day each, respectively. There are over one thousand employed on the road, every batch of a hundred having an overseer who, when they lagged, cried out, and threatened their backs with a light whip.⁴⁹⁷

Rylands concluded that labour would be available without forcing it, if the Government paid the necessary wages.⁴⁹⁸ Yet the market rate of wages was in fact paid by the Government of Cyprus. Wolseley's protestations to that effect are borne out by available evidence, according to which skilled journeymen, received 1s. a day, i.e. they were on a par with the unskilled labourers in Kyrenia's roadworks. As for wages paid to agricultural labourers they stood on average at 7d. a day, i.e. they were considerably lower than the Government rates.⁴⁹⁹

Criticism in the Commons brought requisitioning to an end, and made for an even tighter labour market. In November 1881, the London newspaper Homeward Mail reported the views of a leading British contractor who visited the island:

497. Ibid., Volume 252, June 1, 1880, Column 904.

See the extract in Scott-Stevenson, Our Home, op. cit., p. 231.

498. Parliamentary Debates, Volume 252, June 1, 1880, Column 904.

499. See specifically The Cyprus Blue Book-1880, "Average Rate of Wages for Labour", Nicosia, 1881, p. 343.

Wages have more than doubled since the occupation, and at present the supply of labour falls short of the demand. The great impetus given to all undertakings is shown by the increased cultivation of the land, and the ability of the natives to advance money for building, or other purposes, instead of borrowing it as heretofore.⁵⁰⁰

The greatest difficulties for the Government arose during the harvest period, when labourers would simply abandon their gangs in order to work as threshers. On April 25, 1887, the Government Engineer, Walter Nicol, requested from the Commissioner of Nicosia permission to punish some labourers who had been recruited for work in locust destruction schemes. According to the report the labourers

had no sooner arrived when they demanded a higher rate of pay than that at which they were engaged, complaining at the high price of provisions and finally left the work in a body - many taking employment as harvest labourers.⁵⁰¹

In the long run, few aspects of British policy in Cyprus contributed to such an extent toward the independence of the labouring poor, from the control of the indigenous ruling and employing class, than the government schemes requiring large numbers of unskilled working-hands. The Director of Public Works noted in 1903:

There is no enterprise under the Head of Public Works which is of so great benefit to so large a number of persons - chiefly of the labouring classes, probably the most deserving of any - than that of road making.⁵⁰²

500. Homeward Mail, "Latest from Cyprus", November 14, 1881.

501. SA1:1161/1887, Walter Nicol, Government Engineer, to Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, April 25, 1887.

502. Monograph on Roads, op. cit., p. iii.

The awkward and defiant attitude of the labouring poor continued during the 1890s, which were years of want in Cyprus. The overall expansion of employment opportunities and the increasing awareness in the significance of education, cut down on the numbers of youths prepared to undergo the apprenticeship stage before being able to earn money. Sir Samuel Baker acutely observed in 1879:

The wages of both artisans and ordinary labourers have risen considerably since the British occupation, as might have been expected...Should schools be established and education become general throughout the island, the result will probably be exhibited by a corresponding advance in wages, as individuals will estimate their value at a higher rate.⁵⁰³

Baker was proven right. In 1887, a year of acute distress, the conservative Times of Cyprus observed that European and upper class native families were badly and dearly served with domestics and that tradesmen found labour less abundant and quite as dear as in years of plenty. Regarding apprentice labour, the editorial noted with dismay:

Now employers have to seek for these juvenile workers and find them with difficulty, partly because of the energetic efforts of the Director of Education and liberal government grants in aid of schools, apropos of which let us pray that we shall not here be done to death of literary wisdom as in England, where many a good cobbler has been lost to our soles by reason of the Three Rs.⁵⁰⁴

503. Baker, Cyprus, op. cit., pp. 422-423.

504. The Times of Cyprus, October 17, 1887.

CHAPTER 7

THE EROSION OF PATERNALISM

I. Declining Respect for the Establishment

For the Church, accustomed during Ottoman rule to setting the limits on what was permitted and what was not, the new environment posed a serious threat. This was not only the result of the weakening of the clergy's economic and political status; equally disquieting was the spread of the new literature, which did not only combat the credulous ignorance of the population but also threatened to undermine religious belief. On December 7, 1889, the Archbishop issued an encyclical on what was referred to as the sorry state of the moral situation of his flock and on religious indifference and infidelity, caused by the ruinous intrusion of materialist theories. The Archbishop urged clergymen and laymen to disseminate religious sentiment and listed a number of journals, published in Constantinople, Athens and Marseilles, which should be distributed to the population.⁵⁰⁵

With the spread of literacy the clergy was no longer expected to command a monopoly of wisdom. When in need of advice, those who could not read were turning to a growing variety of individuals who did. Phoni tis Kyprou was anxious about the stand of the intelligentsia, of teachers in particular:

505. See the encyclical in Phoni tis Kyprou, "Sophronios Eleo Theou Arkhiepiskopos Pasis Kyprou" (Sophronios by the Grace of God Archbishop of Cyprus), December 25/7, 1889.

Most of them have begun putting into the heads of villagers the notion that fasting is an enactment of fat clergymen and church services an enactment of lazy monks...Many of the gentry in the countryside, trying to look superior to the rest of their fellow villagers, have begun to ignore their superiors as well as the senior and lower clergy. Behaving in this manner toward those who have by tradition been granted the greatest honour and respect, they imitate the so-called noble inhabitants of the towns.⁵⁰⁶

Declining respect for the Church was manifest in various ways. Even the body of clerical supporters, which had stood fast by their Bishops during the early years of colonial rule, was breaking ranks. The internal discipline of Ottoman times, where a Bishop could imprison a priest or banish him to a monastery, was a thing of the past; under the British no restraint could be put on a priest's personal liberty except by order of a competent court. In 1888, the Queen's Advocate observed that the peasantry were not infrequently ready to back up a disobedient or immoral priest against his superiors, inducing him to continue his ministrations even after suspension or deprivation.⁵⁰⁷ Church goers were decreasing in numbers and were also displaying an alarmingly liberal disposition. Salpinx, having criticised the disorderly conduct of the male members of the congregation, added:

The deep silence and great quiet observed in the churches of the Westerns have often astonished us, while on the contrary, as though our Church were possessed by the democratic spirit, we enjoy every freedom

506. Ibid., "I ethiki tis nisou katastasis" (The moral condition of the island), February 5/17, 1894.

507. CO 67/61, Minute by W. R. Collyer, August 21, 1888. Enclosure in "Confidential", Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 1, 1888.

in it, and we talk and wrangle and get angry and laugh. Only we rarely weep and most rarely display contrition of heart. All other sensations we experience in abundance. It appears, indeed, from this fact also that freedom is inherent in the Greeks and that their neck does not endure a yoke, even when imposed by religion.⁵⁰⁸

Obligatory dues had long been abolished, yet popular jokes and proverbs still ridiculed the clergy's rapacity, as well as their low level of literacy which in many cases hardly justified their claims of moral leadership within the parish.⁵⁰⁹ Aggressive popular satire even picked on the moral standing of their wives, given that a priest could administer services to his flock only if his family were beyond reproach.⁵¹⁰

Pagan festivals, which had been attached to the Church's calendar, were reverting to largely secular festivities. This was especially noticeable during Lent, the 40-day period from Clean Monday, when fasting began, to Easter. As church attendance on the final Sunday of Lent diminished, the feast of the following day became increasingly more robust. In 1894, Phoni tis Kyprou noted that even the more devout Christians, having according to

508. Salpinx, "Ai en tois naois aediai" (Blemishes in the churches), January 8, 1894. Cited in Hackett, History, op. cit., pp. 274-275.

509. See the two-part collection by N. G. Kyriazis titled "Klirikon peiragmata" (Teasing of the clergy), in Kypriaka Khronika, No. 3, 1931, pp. 203-210 and No. 2, 1935, pp. 166-170.

510. See Nearkhos Clerides and Neoclis G. Kyriazis, "Histories tis papadias" (Stories on priests' wives), ibid., No. 3, 1935, pp. 101-121.

custom visited all, or most, of the town's churches and having kissed the holy icons, then rushed to the market to purchase wine and food for their bellies. The paper added:

Though this celebration has begun to pale in the face of civilization, to degenerate and be transformed from a universal event to one pertaining to the crowd [εορτή του όχλου], and held in contempt by the aristocracy [υπό της αριστοκρατίας], nevertheless it was celebrated gaily by the people.⁵¹¹

By 1899, the same newspaper noted that Lent had been kept with unprecedented conviviality by the labouring population and that only cripples had stayed at home that day.⁵¹² More alarmingly, ridicule was being poured out from the lower strata in an increasingly open manner. During the carnival week of 1890 Phoni tis Kyprou complained that the carnival was only celebrated by street youths, running about with blackened faces and disturbing passers-by. The paper added that "prior to the occupation, the carnival was indeed a lively event, because all the good youth of the capital took part...But that was a bygone age!"⁵¹³

E. P. Thompson has pointed to the manifest disloyalty of popular satire in Hanoverian England, which however provided no handle to law officers. Deference, when exhibited by the poor, was made up

of one part of self-interest, one part of dissimulation, and only one part of the awe of authority. They were part of the countertheatre of the poor...Just

511. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Lefkosiaticki ekho" (Echo of Nicosia), March 5/17, 1894.

512. Ibid., "I apocreo" (The carnival), March 11, 1899.

513. Ibid., "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), February 10/22, 1890.

as the rulers asserted their hegemony by a studied theatrical style, so the plebs asserted their presence by a theatre of threat and sedition.⁵¹⁴

Effigy-burning is seen by Thompson as a primitive manifestation of political sentiment. As we move backward into time, we find the poor using archaic codes to demonstrate that their supposed deference could be very brittle. In 19th century Cyprus a striking act of symbolism was acted out at Easter, the most important celebration in the Greek Orthodox calendar, with the burning of Judas' effigy. This is referred to in mainstream interpretations of Cypriot folklore, as a form of popular punishment for Judas' treason. No doubt this was part of the cultural make-up of the custom. A drawing by De Arde in Cyprus in 1898 depicts an effigy, in stereotype Jewish features and dress, being burnt at stake and watched by a crowd.⁵¹⁵ Yet, an eyewitness account by Ohnefalsch-Richter, over the same period, reveals social and political overtones, of which incidentally the author herself seems oblivious. A photograph in the book shows the effigy in a European suit, wearing a cap and smoking a nargile.*⁵¹⁶ Is this a depiction of a Jew or of a town merchant?

514. Thompson, "Plebeian Culture", op. cit., pp. 399-400.

515. The plate is depicted in Dialexeis Panepistimiou, [1], op. cit., Appendix.

516. * Water-pipe.
Ohnefalsch-Richter (Marangou), Hellinika, op. cit., plate 26.

Quite often the effigy was decorated with a necklace of 30 imitation pieces of silver, damning Judas who had received them, and hurling a veiled charge on the possessors of wealth. According to Ohnefalsch-Richter's description, the effigy was seated facing backwards on an ass, to be ridiculed by the population. It was then taken in front of the church, where it was put to all manners of death by a delirious crowd, and was then burnt at stake. The author observes that a similar custom prevailed amongst the Greeks of Constantinople adding that the custom had by that time also arrived in Germany.⁵¹⁷ Burning a Jewish effigy would be natural for the Constantinople Greeks, who had been in perpetual antagonism with the Jewish Millet; the custom would also be congruent with anti-semitism, then fashionable in the Second Reich. In Cyprus however a Jewish community was virtually absent.⁵¹⁸ A mere 68 Jews inhabited the island in 1881. Of them, only five were recorded in the district of Paphos and not a single one in Famagusta and Kyrenia.⁵¹⁹ Still, Judas' effigy was set ablaze in every church-yard in the island, indicating that something more immediate and tangible was in fact condemned to eternal punishment by the populace.

517. Ibid., p. 80.

518. According to Dr. Costas Kyrris, this absence might have been the consequence of persecution in the Middle East after 1760 (C. Kyrris, "The Jewish Community and the Rise and Fall of some Urban Agglomerations in Cyprus under Ottoman Rule", Kypriakai Spoudai, Volume XXX [Λ'], 1966, pp. 179-180).

519. See specifically Census 1881, op. cit., p. 35.

A careful study of Cyprus' folklore would probably reveal sedition behind other apparently innocent and politically neutral customs. The burning of Judas' effigy seems to indicate that for the labouring poor of Cyprus, who, unlike those of Hanoverian England, were of colonial status, symbolism could demonstrate opposition to local, as well as, foreign masters. This is revealed by another reference of Ohnefalsch-Richter's: during the early years of British rule the population would dress the effigy like an Englishman, cap, club and all, to the amusement of good-natured British officials. The author however, also notes that the burning of Judas' effigy had been opposed by the educated Greeks.⁵²⁰ Those who could afford higher education were apparently anxious at the sentiments discernible in the ritual.

II. Deviance and Crime

A telling sign of this spirit of deviance was a dramatic increase in crime. In 1879, the Chief Justice, Lushington Philips, had in his first report confirmed the peaceful disposition of the population. The return of criminal cases showed a large number of stabbing and sheep-stealing, the typical offences of a peasant society. In cases decided in the High Court most criminal offences were "of a class not calling for observation; coining and passing false coin, petty thefts and assaults; and the civil cases coming within the jurisdiction of Deputy Commissioners".⁵²¹

520. Ohnefalsch-Richter (Marangou), Hellinika, op. cit., p. 78.

521. Cyprus-Report, 1879, op. cit., "Mr. L. Philips' Report on Judicial Matters", January 11, 1880, p. 27.

Thereafter, and though crime had been increasing year after year, the report submitted in 1887 by Elliot Bovill, Chief Justice, indicated a sudden upsurge in criminal statistics:

The number of cases committed for trial is most lamentable. I had occasion to dwell on the prevalence of crime in the island when furnishing my report for the year 1885-6. Things appeared bad in the returns for that year, but for this year the committals for trial have increased 78 per cent...⁵²²

The report for the following year, 1887-1888, made more gloomy reading. The number of persons committed to trial had risen from 556 to 875, indicating an increase of 46% over 1886-1887 and of 180% over 1885-1886. W. J. Smith, Acting Chief Justice, commented:

The state of things thus disclosed is little short of appalling, and is deserving the most serious attention. That serious crime should prevail to the extent indicated by these returns in an island with a purely agricultural population, is a very remarkable circumstance, and seems to point out to a widespread demoralisation amongst the people.⁵²³

At the turn of the decade all kinds of criminal statistics prospered. Between 1888 and 1893, the number of persons apprehended by the police rose from 5,724 to 8,543 and the number of summary convictions from 2,091 to 3,673.⁵²⁴ Though a simple

522. [C.-5251], op. cit., "Report by the Chief Justice", July 21, 1887, p. 11.

523. [C.-5749], Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for 1887-8, "Report by the Chief Justice", June 27, 1888, (London, 1889), p. 17.

524. [C.-7411], Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the year 1892-93, A. E. Kershaw, Inspector of Prisons, "Comparative Table showing the Number of Offences, Apprehensions, Convictions, and Acquittals for the last Four Years in Cyprus", June 23, 1893, (London, 1894), p. 46.

statistical review would indicate a sheer increase in crime, most offences had at the same time manifest economic motives. W. J. Smith, who had by 1893 become Chief Justice, observed in the year's report:

The substantial increase in the number of offences reported during this year has therefore occurred in "other offences", under which are grouped together offences against the Revenue laws, Forest laws, the laws known as the Field Watchmen laws, the Quarantine laws, breaches of municipal ordinances, &c...

I have but little doubt too, though I have no statistics to guide me, that as the area of the delimited forest is extended from year to year the number of offences against the provisions of the Forest laws increases.

I think therefore that it might be safely assumed that the increased number of offences shown in the return is not due to any increase of crime in the ordinary acceptance of the word.⁵²⁵

This situation went in line with a change in the attitudes of the rural poor. In a despatch to the Secretary of State, in August 1891, the High Commissioner noted the want of sufficient authority in the countryside and the fact that nobody seemed to be in a position to check disorderly conduct in a village which did not happen to be near a police station. Bulwer added gloomily: "The influence of the elders of a village and of others whose position ought to carry weight, is no longer sufficiently regarded by those disposed to disorder and lawless conduct".⁵²⁶ The same people who paid their respects to the merchant money-

525. Ibid., W. J. Smith, Chief Justice, "Report on Crime", June 22, 1893, p. 39.

526. SA1:1217/1891, Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 17, 1891.

lenders and the clergy in the morning, were being manifestly disloyal under cover of darkness. According to Phoni tis Kyprou, several letters had been received from various villages of the island bemoaning the prevalence of vandalism and breakdown of order and adding that "during the evening the doors of priests and honest heads of families were sprayed with human excreta, and large stones were hurled against the houses of decent people..."⁵²⁷

One morning in September 1887, in Lefkara village, Larnaca, a handwritten bill was found nailed on a coffee-shop door. The text, worth quoting to the full, is given in the official English translation (without any amendments to the language) since the Greek original was not included in the archive:

Speech

(illegible) The person who dares to tear this letter must know that he will be destroyed from Lefkara & that he will suffer great damages in his trees & he will be a pimp & a Rufiano (illegible).

Gentlemen (illegible) This letter is very sorrowful but useful for you the rich men. You must know that your faults & bad actions towards the poor people are to the utmost degree. You try to destroy all the village by your bad actions & it is not right for the sake of 10 persons 300 other poor men to perish with their families. You were before poor & now you gained money so you ought to remember there is a God. Do you remember your fathers how they died?

You must know that the person who takes out a writ of sale of properties belonging to a poor must leave the place here elsewhere he will be killed. If a poor owes you money you must treat him as heretofore.

Come to yourselves if you do not wish to lose your lives!

The man who takes out a writ of sale for poor people will

527. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I taxis en tois khoriois" (Order in villages), November 27/8, 1895.

lose his trees
" " his animals
" " his life.

Ofcourse the rich man who reads this letter will laugh. You must know that the persons who wrote this letter are 11 (8 from Lefkara & 3 from another village, we cannot say the village of the 3 persons but you know very well that they will destroy your trees!)

The rich man will laugh again but he must bear in mind that he will be killed & that he will require a companion to even go the coffee shops.

We wrote another similar letter which we will send to one friend at Larnaca to post it at the door of the Court.

Those who have spite with us*⁵²⁸ their daughters will be with us & the rich men will be buried. We wrote to the Tax Collector that he must stop the collections of Taxes otherwise he will lose his life.⁵²⁹

Two points are worthy of particular note in this affair. The letter is more of a handbill, addressed to the rich, not only by virtue of its contents but also by the fact that it had been posted up on the door of a meeting place of the community. Though the agents of the Government are also mentioned, they only take up approximately one eighth of the space in the text. Secondly, the collective pronoun "we" is used four times, showing the authors' intention of voicing the sense of injustice of the poor as a whole. Whether the letter indicated the general protest of these poor, rather than the voice of a small group, cannot be demonstrated. The rural poor had hardly crossed the threshold of literacy, which would allow them to utilize with confidence such

528. * Evidently, the phrase "who harbour a grudge against us" should have been used.

529. SA1:2613/1887, Enclosure in Lawrence Olive, Acting Commissioner of Larnaca, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, September 20, 1887.

a form of protest. In Lefkara in any case the authorities, though having arrested certain suspects, failed to collect sufficient evidence. Silence in the community forced the dismissal of the case.⁵³⁰

One can only speculate on similar letters received by private persons. Perhaps they never came to light because the recipients did not bother, or dare, inform the authorities, or because they kept them secret and complied with the demands made upon them. Thus, attempting to trace and count the number of such letters could not be the best way of deciding whether the Lefkara letter presented a personal or a collective grievance. The letter ought rather to be located within the context of late 1887, when broad strata were, for the first time, being reduced to a hitherto unknown level of poverty and subjected to the alienation of their property, following the actions of fellow members of their community and of the authorities. Even more rewarding, would be tracing the materialization of the threats, which proved in fact not to be idle. Though the authors of the Lefkara letter had threatened the physical persons of their oppressors, human lives were not taken -not for another few years that is. The poor man's desperate fury was primarily directed at the rich man's property. According to official records the number of such offences exhibited no significant increase (from 597 in 1886 to 614 in 1887). These figures however seem misleading. The Chief Justice

530. Ibid., Minute by Olive to Warren, February 23, 1888.

received information that in the vine-growing region of Kilani, as well as other parts of the island, malicious injuries to property were matters of almost daily occurrence. In some cases, although the perpetrators were known, no information was given against them to the police. Witnesses, or even those whose property had suffered, simply feared that if they offered information "their donkeys or oxen would be stabbed, their vines cut down and their fences burned". The Chief Justice concluded that a considerable number of offences remained unreported or undetected.⁵³¹

Enough evidence was procured by the police to generalize that the offenders were "those members of the community who in any country would form what is called the criminal part of the population, as also those who would form the idle and vagabond class".⁵³² The authorities, and the elected members of the Legislative Council, would not envisage curtailing the growth of this class. Punishment was the only remedy. The major measure adopted was the enactment and implementation of the "Malicious Injury to Property Law", which provided that, in those cases where the perpetrators remained unknown, compensation would be recoverable by the person injured from the inhabitants of the village where the injury was done. It was held that this would deter the commitment

531. [C.-5749], "Chief Justice's Report", op. cit., pp. 19-20.

532. CO 67/71, "Confidential", Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 7, 1891.

of covert injuries, first by the knowledge that the person injured would not be a loser and by the greater fear of discovery, in consequence of "enlisting the inhabitants of a village on the side of the protection of property..."⁵³³

Though the law was amended and perfected in 1894, for many years to come the authorities would be unable to deal effectively with the problem, which had been endemic in the deep transformation that was under way in Cypriot society. In fact, where injuries to property failed to awaken the wealthy to their obligations, desperate individuals resorted to attacks against persons. This phenomenon was more pronounced in the Carpas, the region most ground down by taxation and usurious oppression. Defiance of the law included defiance of the persons of those enforcing it. On July 20, 1887, the Acting Receiver General, William Taylor, reported to the Chief Secretary on the decrease in revenue from the various districts. Regarding Famagusta, where the tithes for the month of June were only £52, against £300 in June 1886, Taylor noted that Arthur Young, Commissioner of Famagusta, had been blaming the decrease partly on the discontinuance of the practice of policemen accompanying tax-collectors. The latter had been saying that they were in fear of their lives and that it was impossible for them to execute warrants and make good collections, unless they had a trooper attached to them.⁵³⁴ An incident

533. Ibid., Bulwer to Knutsford, August 1, 1891.

534. SA1:1979/1887, William Taylor, Acting Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, July 20, 1887.

was reported by a tax-collector in the district of Nicosia, that he had been faced by a man shouting and openly urging his fellow villagers not to pay taxes.⁵³⁵

Acts of defiance soon became more emphatic. A despatch from the Commissioner of Limassol to the Receiver General listed a number of persons from various villages of the District, sentenced with fines and/or imprisonment ranging from 10 to 15 days. The charge in each case was identical: "For obstructing the tax-collector while in execution of his duty".⁵³⁶ At times the authorities found it impossible to obtain evidence, and prosecute obstructions, and even attacks, against tax-collectors, simply because such acts did not run counter to popular notions of justice. On October 13, 1888, a tax-collector was physically assaulted in the village of Dhimes, while trying to deliver to the Muhtar's house the donkey of a woman who owed money for taxes. Though suspicions centred on two men, the police was unable to obtain any evidence against them.⁵³⁷ Thereafter, police escorts in the collection of revenue became indispensable and were sorely missed when they were, even if temporarily, unavailable. In early 1891, a cholera epidemic from the Middle East diverted part of

535. SA1:1875/1888, Costas Petrides, tax-collector, to Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, June 6, 1888.

536. SA1:1162/1890, Roland Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to James Swettenham, Receiver General, April 22, 1890.

537. For details of this case see SA1:3047/1892, Tankerville Chamberlain, Limassol Police Commandant, to A. E. Kershaw, Chief Police Commandant, November 24 and November 25, 1892.

the island's police force to coastal quarantine duties. On February 9, 1891, the Commissioner of Larnaca wrote to the Receiver General that collections had suffered in consequence of the fact that too few men were left to escort tax-collectors in their work.⁵³⁸ The same issue was raised by the Commissioner of Limassol, who was engaged in collecting excise revenue from the wine-producing villages of the district.⁵³⁹ Apart from assisting in the execution of warrants, policemen were also considered indispensable for the protection of tax-collectors, who carried considerable sums on their persons and were in danger of being assaulted and robbed.⁵⁴⁰

Hatred against the representatives of authority led to premeditated attacks. On October 24, 1892, in the village of Anoyira, the Muhtar was murdered. Though certain suspects were arrested, A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, noted to Harry Thompson, Chief Secretary, that the case was extremely unlikely to be followed through, owing to the evidence for the

538. SA1:440/1891, C. D. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to J. Swettenham, Receiver General, February 9, 1891.

539. See the despatches in:
a) SA1:574/1891, R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, February 21, 1891;
b) SA1:1176/1891, Michell to Warren, April 16, 1891.

540. See the request of police escorts for these purposes in SA1:440/1891, C. D. Cobham, Commissioner of Larnaca, to J. Swettenham, Receiver General, March 3, 1891.

prosecution being not altogether satisfactory and "a strong case of alibi being available for one of the men for whom there would appear to be strong local sympathy".⁵⁴¹ The most serious crime of this nature occurred on October 2, 1892, with the murder of Abdullah Osman Effendi, Müdür of Paphos. The murder was, according to the High Commissioner, "confidently ascribed, by those able to judge, to animosity incurred by the Müdür in the discharge of his duties as a revenue officer".⁵⁴² A two-month investigation highlighted nothing but the spirit of enmity against the authorities, nursed by the local population. The High Commissioner informed the Secretary of State that he believed the murder to have been committed by persons from the village of Peya, who had been prosecuted by the late Müdür for procuring salt. The High Commissioner noted that a rigorous prosecution of offences against the Salt Law "in which is included the unlawful possession, as well as the collection, of salt, does lead to acts of disorder and retaliation, which are of a far graver character than the offences themselves". The Government was in fact in danger of being "placed in the embarrassing position of having to choose between an increase of crime, and a permanent loss of revenue".⁵⁴³

541. SA1:3099/1892, Kershaw to Thompson, October 27, 1892.

542. CO 67/77, Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 17, 1892. Enclosure by Charles Cade, Acting Commissioner of Paphos, to Harry Thompson, Chief Secretary, October 10, 1892.

543. CO 67/79, "Confidential", Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, January 16, 1893.

Apart from the authorities, the rich were also targets of violent attacks, especially those against whom the population nursed personal grievances. In the Carpas peninsula despair and hatred were expressed through swift acts of violence against property and persons. The most serious incident was the murder, in March 1896, of a prominent money-lender, once again with no forthcoming evidence for the police. During May 1896, the authorities received information of a plan to kill another two money-lenders as well as a Prelate, Exarch Joseph, who represented the Archbishop in the region.⁵⁴⁴ P. Ongley, Commandant of Famagusta Police, in a despatch to the Chief Commandant of Police, referred to one of the threatened money-lenders as "the most unpopular man in the Carpas" who had made his fortune through usury and speculation in times of scarcity. As for the Exarch, he was reputed to have amassed considerable wealth by money-lending and would quite often sell the property of villagers indebted to him. Police protection was also being provided to other money-lenders in the district, who had been frightened by the murder.⁵⁴⁵ In another despatch, P. Ongley, as Acting Commissioner of the district, was even more explicit on the social causes of lawlessness:

544. SA1:308/1896, "Confidential", C. J. Cade for Chief Commandant of Police, to P. Ongley, Local Commandant of Police, Famagusta, May 22, 1896.

545. Ibid., "Confidential", P. Ongley, Local Commandant of Police, Famagusta, to A. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, May 28, 1896.

There can be no doubt that thefts do take place in the Carpas and that other crimes are committed - possibly in larger proportion this year...owing to the distress which prevailed, want of employment, and the refusal on the part of money-lenders...to afford assistance when it was most needed.⁵⁴⁶

III. The Phenomenon of Social Banditry

The most serious manifestation of primitive opposition by the labouring poor, against both wealth and the colonial Government, was social banditry. According to Eric Hobsbawm, banditry is in one sense a rather primitive form of organized social protest: "At any rate in many societies it is regarded as such by the poor, who consequently protect the bandit, regard him as their champion, idealize him and turn him into a myth".⁵⁴⁷ Having flourished in Cyprus during the late 1880s and the 1890s, the phenomenon confirms Hobsbawm's thesis on banditry as tending to become epidemic during times of pauperization and economic crisis. Social banditry occurs during and after periods of abnormal hardship and when "the jaws of the dynamic modern world seize the static communities in order to destroy and transform them". Banditry was resurgent in Southern Italy

after Unification, fanned by the introduction of capitalist law and economic policy. In Calabria and Sardinia the major epoch of brigandage began in the 1890's when the modern economy (and agricultural depression and emigration) made their impact.⁵⁴⁸

546. SA1:893/1896, P. Ongley, Acting Commissioner of Famagusta, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, May 28, 1896,

547. Hobsbawm, Rebels, op. cit., "The Social Bandit", p. 13.

548. Ibid., p. 25.

Social banditry in Cyprus developed in the similar social and political circumstances of the period. Fugitives such as Dimitrouin, Kokkinis, Yallouris and above all the Hassanpoulia, the most celebrated bandits in the history of the island, achieved fame by the fear they inspired in men of property and the police's futile efforts to capture them.

Banditry has been totally neglected in modern Cypriot historiography. Therefore, the only two works on the subject, though published before World War II, are still useful as sources of information. The first, by Frederick Templer, titled "The Poulis", was published in October 1917 in the Blackwood's Magazine (No. MCCXXIV, Vol. CCII). Though writing about 25 years after the times of the Hassanpoulia, the author was a contemporary and well-placed to know their story, having served in Cyprus as District Judge (1882-1893) and Queen's Advocate (1893-1898). The second work on the subject, by Michael Kareklas, Paphos Police Commandant, was published in Nicosia in 1938. The title, The Criminal Activities of the Hassanpoulia, reflected not only the policeman's view of lawbreakers but also that of his superiors. Jack Ashmore, Deputy Chief Commandant of Police, had commissioned Kareklas to write a history of the exploits "of the three known murderers called 'Hassanpoulia'".⁵⁴⁹ The preface to the publica-

549. Kareklas, Hassanpoulia, op. cit., p. 5.

tion, written by Governor H. R. Palmer himself, referred to "the impunity with which hardened criminals of this type preyed upon the country for years, and terrorized its inhabitants".⁵⁵⁰ Kareklas had already received an MBE in 1932, for his loyalty during the October 1931 revolt. In 1939, a year after the publication of his report, he became the first Cypriot to be awarded the Colonial Police Medal.⁵⁵¹

However, apart from the attitudes of the persons behind the creation of the report, the evaluation of this source must also consider the purpose for which it came into existence, i.e. to present Cyprus as a land of lawlessness harboured by elected and corrupt politicians, prior to the enforcement of order in 1931. What is more, the author's ability to provide first-hand information was qualified by the fact that he based his report almost exclusively on interviews from villages visited; it is not unlikely that simple peasants during the Palmerokratia were guarded in their references to those whom their powerful interviewer obviously considered as criminals. F. Templer's article, who was perhaps as prejudiced a colonial official as any, came before the experience of the 1931 revolt and the ensuing dictatorship; Templer wrote of his own accord, after retirement and, at the age of 68, aspiring to little. A few months after the publication of

550. Ibid., p. 4.

551. See specifically M. L. Santamas, British Awards in Cyprus 1878-1960, Limassol, 1986, pp. 71 and 80 respectively.

his article he passed away. Not surprisingly, his report abides more closely than Kareklas' to the picture emergent from archival research on the subject.

The only modern work on banditry in Cyprus, by Dr. Paul Sant Cassia, questions the notion that the Hassanpoulia bandits expressed popular protest in a pre-political manner, as Hobsbawm holds, and also that they were generally treated as popular heroes. The author, partly accepting Professor Anton Blok's critique on Hobsbawm, notes that such thieves terrified several simple peasants. According to Sant Cassia the Hassanpoulia acted as hit men, had some support from the local population and some powerful protectors.⁵⁵² This view perhaps stems from two facts: that Sant Cassia's sole source of information on bandits in Cyprus has been Kareklas' report and also that in Sant Cassia's work, banditry is not located in the proper historical context of the period, that is the break down of the fabric of rural society, accentuated after the agricultural crisis which began in 1887.

The phenomenon of social banditry in Cyprus deserves serious study, because it signifies the response of a pre-industrial and pre-political poor to the intrusion of foreigners and local representatives of bourgeois wealth, who upset their traditional way

552. Paul Sant Cassia, "Banditry, Myth, and Terror in Cyprus and other Mediterranean Societies", Comparative Studies in Society and History, No. 35, 1993, p. 776. For the exchange between Blok and Hobsbawm see Anton Blok, "The Peasant and the Brigand: Social Banditry Reconsidered", ibid., XIV, 1972, pp. 494-503 and Eric Hobsbawm, "Social Bandits: Reply", ibid., pp. 503-505.

of life. In this sense, banditry in Cyprus during the first two decades of colonial rule may be seen as a surrogate for a social movement. The degree of the bandits' support means that in righting wrongs they applied a criterion of just relations between men in general and especially between the rich and the poor, which was in fact widely accepted by the lower strata of Cypriot society of the period.⁵⁵³ The most well-known bandits began their careers by committing offences which were not considered as criminal within the code of justice of the labouring poor. The older of the Hassanpoulia brothers committed his first grave offence over a woman's honour and then proceeded to kill a thief who had robbed and insulted his ailing father. The Government had taken special measures to capture him, though the prospect was not hopeful. According to Templer, so popular had the bandit become "that songs and paeans of his triumphs were composed and sung in the bazaars throughout the island, (and) his name was a byword for all that was bold and chivalrous and daring".⁵⁵⁴ Such literature was quite popular in the period. For the older Hassanpoulis two ballads were published, another two for Yallouris and three for the younger Hassanpoulia brothers; in some cases, these came out in more than one edition.⁵⁵⁵ Templer added on the older

553. On this point see generally E. J. Hobsbawm, Bandits, London, 1972, p. 26.

554. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., p. 484.

555. See the ballads listed in Empire Society, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

Hassanpoulis:

There must have been considerable reason and ground for the reputation that he had gained for chivalrous conduct and courage. At all events, without describing him as a hero, there was no record of sordid crimes attributed to him. He seems to have acted as a friend of the poor and needy peasant who was little able to take care of himself.⁵⁵⁶

The bandit naturally did not regard the peasants as his prey, since he could hardly afford to take from the poor if he were to retain popular support. Commandant Kareklas himself acknowledged the humane aspects of the outlaw's personality:

His life on the hills and wherever he went was very honest. He never annoyed anybody, but especially he protected women...He helped them in their work, accompanied them back to the outskirts of the village and then disappeared. He only asked them for news of Police movements which they gave him willingly.⁵⁵⁷

Yallouris seems also to have been highly esteemed by the population and, though a fugitive, was openly admired. The ballader Kyriacos Papadopoulos praised Yallouris' gallantry and nobility of sentiments:

Like the sky lit with stars
such was the fame of Yallouris in the world...
always ready to gamble his life
he did not care of prizes and money⁵⁵⁸

In October 1892, in the village of Lemythou, the police were actually prevented by some inhabitants from capturing two members of Yallouris' gang. Phoni tis Kyprou observed:

556. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., p. 503.

557. Kareklas, Hassanpoulia, op. cit., p. 8.

558. K. Papadopoulos, Yallouris, op. cit., p. 2.

Until a while ago we believed that the peasants, seeing that the police did not pursue the bandits, were forced to protect them out of fear. Yet the events which took place in the village of Lemythou demonstrate exactly the opposite.⁵⁵⁹

Like the Hassanpoullia, Yallouris also moved freely about the countryside. When advised to take some precautions, he was reported by Salpinx to have replied: "Of whom am I to fear? [Πολύνε θα φοβηθώ;]". The newspaper, in disgust, likened the proud bandit's reply to Louis XIV's L'état c'est moi.⁵⁶⁰ This was hardly suprising since the gang's gravest offences were to hold up tax-collectors, in order to procure enough funds and leave the island.⁵⁶¹ Georghis Yallouris and especially the older of the Hassanpoullia brothers, seemed to embody several of the attributes which Hobsbawm ascribes to the "noble robber": the champion of the peasants, who righted wrongs and was admired, helped and supported by his people.⁵⁶² Templer wrote of the older Hassanpouli:

He seems to have played the role of benefactor to the villagers by disposing of their common foes, the usurer and the goat-stealer, and it does not appear that robbery was his object...Consequently he was able to trade upon the fact that no one would think of giving him away.⁵⁶³

559. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Kakourgoi prostatevomenoi" (Villains being protected), October 23/5, 1892.

560. Salpinx, "I katastasis" (The situation), September 23, 1892.

561. SA1:2874/1892, Roland Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to Harry Thompson, Chief Secretary, October 2, 1892.

562. Hobsbawm, Bandits, op. cit., p. 43.

563. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., p. 483.

Hassanpoulis was not captured but decided to give himself up after being seriously wounded. Yallouris even managed to escape from the island in 1893, despite a hefty reward for his capture, and seek refuge in Turkey. Being away from his native environment however he was also vulnerable to informers, who eventually turned him over to the Turkish Government. Back in Cyprus, where he was sent in chains in January 1894, the authorities were anxious about his popularity; though his offences had been committed in Limassol, F. Templer, who was then serving as Queen's Advocate, personally intervened with the Chief Secretary, A. Young, that an impartial trial could not be held in the District Court, owing to the inconvenience it would cause to witnesses.⁵⁶⁴ Nor was the popularity of bandits a purely regional affair. The transportation of Yallouris, whose fame was not as great as that of the Hassanpoulia, for trial from Paphos to Nicosia, demonstrated that the esteem he enjoyed amongst the lower strata was island-wide. According to the folk poet Kyriacos Papadopoulos:

When he was being transported through Nicosia,
the bazaar was crammed by a multitude of people.
Many were sorry for him because he was a handsome man,
countless people had gathered, more than two thousand,
those who loved him were very sad.⁵⁶⁵

564. SA1:188/1893, "Confidential", Templer to Young, January 9, 1894.

565. K. Papadopoulos, Yallouris op. cit., p. 5.

Similar sentiments were also manifest in the case of Hassanpoulis. F. Templer indicated that the populace gave him, and later his brothers, the subriquet of Pouli, the Greek word for bird, as a token of admiration for the ease with which they shifted from one district to another.⁵⁶⁶ Their agility was flatteringly contrasted to the sluggishness of the police. A poem on the older brother, by the folk bard Christos Jabouras, came out in three editions, ridiculing the forces of the law, who were outwitted, outrun and afraid of him:

He did what he did and at once blinded them,
he pounded his feet on the ground and they lost him...
the police ran after him without seeing him
not knowing where they really went
and as you gather they were scared to hell
may God spare you from such a fright!⁵⁶⁷

Of his two younger brothers, who embarked upon their activities five years after he had been caught and jailed, one was charged with a stabbing while trying to save the life of the other, during a brawl over a woman's honour;⁵⁶⁸ hence the authorities would get no co-operation in apprehending them. Generally however, the band of the younger Hassanpoulia, which was active in the mid-1890s, did not conform to their older brother's noble bandit image. Theirs was a record of violence:

566. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., p. 483.

567. C. Jabouras, Tragoudion tou Hassan Pouli (The song of Hassan Pouli), Nicosia, 1892, p. 3.

568. See the circumstances in which the two brothers found themselves on the wrong side of the law in Phoni tis Kyprou, "Phonos kai travmatismoi en Papho" (Murder and wounding in Paphos), January 6/18, 1895.

murders, attempts at murder and, in two cases, violations of women. Practically all of these crimes remained within the limits of a certain code: against policemen, informers and those related to them and against money-lenders, that is to say all who represented authority and wealth and enjoyed no sympathy among the labouring poor of town and country. During the first week of October 1895, in Polis Chrysokhou, the Hassanpoulia robbed a very prominent merchant [των τα πρώτα φερόντων μεταξύ του κύκλου των εμπορών].⁵⁶⁹ Over the same time Epiphánios, Bishop of Paphos, had been on tour in his diocese, where panic reigned among merchants and money-lenders.⁵⁷⁰ On October 10, the Bishop convened a meeting of the principal men in his diocese from which a resolution was sent to the Acting High Commissioner, praying for measures to protect the life, honour and property of the taxpaying inhabitants.⁵⁷¹

The fear inspired ^{amongst} these notables was inversely proportional to the support the bandits enjoyed amongst common folk. The lack of moderation in killing, even the abductions of women, did nothing to diminish the bandits' appeal to the populace. Given that terror was part of their image, the press were dis-

569. Phoni tis Kyprou, "To kakourgima en Papho" (Crime in Paphos), October 13/25, 1895.

570. Ibid., Clarence Wodehouse, Commissioner of Paphos, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, October 21, 1895.

571. SA1:2003/1895, Epiphánios, Bishop of Paphos, to A. Young, Acting High Commissioner, October 10, 1895.

mayed at the extent of the bandits' popular support.⁵⁷² The younger Hassanpoulis can be classed into what Hobsbawm has described as the avenger bandits:

They are heroes not in spite of the fear and horror their actions inspire, but in some ways because of them. They are not so much men who right wrongs, but avengers, and exponents of power; their appeal is not that of the agents of justice, but of men who prove that even the poor and weak can be terrible.⁵⁷³

Cypriot peasants and the labouring poor in general admired the bandits as their champions, for want of any more positive activity by themselves. F. Templer located those described as criminal in a different and social context:

The muleteers that they sometimes met upon the road used to boast of having "given the Poulis a ride". In fact their popularity among the lower classes was so great that it was quite useless for the police to take ordinary steps to try and arrest them.⁵⁷⁴

The small gang of unsubmitive fugitives seemed about to be joined in mobilization by the majority. Clarence Wodehouse, Acting Commissioner of Paphos, reported that many of the worst characters, encouraged by the success of the Poulis, had intended to join the fugitives, who were developing into a band of brigands. "Every difficulty is put in the way of the police",

572. a) Salpinx, "Ti simvaini en to Paradiso" (What goes on in Paradise), September 2, 1892;

b) Alithia, "Oi figodikoi hassanpoulides" (The fugitive hassanpoulia), September 22, 1895;

c) Salpinx, "Tines oi ptaiondes - I katastasis - Ti deon genesthai" (Who are to blame - The situation - What must be done), November 20/1, 1895.

573. Hobsbawm, Bandits, op. cit., p. 58.

574. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., p. 491.

reported Wodehouse "and the opposition is increasing". In some instances the peasants crippled the horses of police raiders in their stables.⁵⁷⁵ In the same way that the bandits expressed ideals inherent in peasant society, the peasants were beginning to take on the character of the bandits. R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, noted on the situation which was beginning to develop in the countryside:

In several villages the "bad characters" are inclined to aid, and in some cases to throw in their lot with the fugitives and all the law-abiding villagers are terrorized by these men and prevented from combining against the fugitives or aiding the police.⁵⁷⁶

In the context of the intense social contradictions shaking Cyprus in the late 1880s and 1890s, the younger members of the gang were praised by folk bards in terms no less flattering than those which had been used for noble bandits: their elder brother and Yallouris. Four years later one such bard praised the freedom enjoyed by the younger brothers of the gang and their ingenuity in evading their pursuers:

Hassanpoulia, Hassanpoulia, flying like birds,
dressed in different clothes everyday,
Greek today and Turkish tomorrow⁵⁷⁷

575. SA1:916/1895, C. Wodehouse, Acting Commissioner of Paphos, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, May 14, 1895.

576. CO 67/93, R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, October 29, 1895. Enclosure in Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, October 30, 1895.

577. C. M. Jabouras, Tragoudi ton Hassan-Poulidon (Song of the Hassan-Poulis), Nicosia, 1896, p. 1.

The poem sold 2,000 copies. The popularity of the Poulis was admitted even by Commandant Kareklas, though as a symptom of the state of lawlessness prior to the restoration of order:

They assure me that in most of the villages not only the men, but also women and children used to support them, and when they were in a village and Police were seen coming either men, women and children of the village would run and give them the alarm and they took their precautions. Such was the atmosphere and mentality in the majority of villages of the border of Paphos and Limassol in those days.⁵⁷⁸

The measure of moving a trial to another town to protect witnesses, which had been utilised in the case of Yallouris, was repeated in May 1895, though the defendants were not the fugitives themselves but those who harboured them. Pending the trial of two shepherds accused of helping the Hassanpoulia, William Power, Police Commandant in Paphos, proposed to the Commissioner that since "the feeling of the people seems greatly in favour of the fugitives it would be a good thing for the sake of the witnesses that the trial of these men be transferred to another district".⁵⁷⁹ The Chief Secretary, Arthur Young, agreed with the proposal and supported it in writing to the High Commissioner.⁵⁸⁰ "The Outlaws Proclamation Law" of 1895, which warned the population that harbouring the fugitives was a punishable offence, though initially having not much effect, was subsequently en-

578. Kareklas, Hassanpoulia, op. cit., p. 30.

579. SA1:927/1895, W. Power, Paphos Police Commandant, to C. Wodehouse, Acting Commissioner of Paphos, May 16, 1895.

580. Ibid., Minute by A. Young, Chief Secretary, to Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, May 24, 1895.

forced more sternly by the authorities. On January 31, 1896, in a single trial, 14 people, Greeks and Turks, were found guilty for helping the outlaws.⁵⁸¹ By the end of the following week, a total of 60 persons were arrested and detained on the same charge. The authorities issued a further warning and redoubled their efforts.⁵⁸² A wave of arrests followed; any man merely suspected of having aided the fugitives was liable to be deported, with his family, to the fortress of Famagusta. Unlike the lower strata, who seemed able to endure this pressure, the wealthier and propertied of the fugitives' supporters began to give way. Templer noted:

As soon as several influential families had been deported in this way from Papho, they put their heads together and said to one another: "Look here, if we do not see that these men are captured, we shall lose our goats and animals, olives, mulberry leaves, and everything, for there is no one to look after them".⁵⁸³

Only in these circumstances was the enormous reward accepted by informers who gave away the remaining nucleus of the gang. The two leading desperadoes, having survived the shoot out, were captured, tried and hanged in Nicosia. The last testimony to their popularity was given by the authorities themselves; anxious to

581. SA1:94/1896, James Greenwood, Acting Local Commandant of Police, to A. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, January 31, 1886.

582. Ibid., "Notice" by A. Young, Chief Secretary, February 8, 1896.

583. Templer, "The Poulis", op. cit., pp. 497-498.

The significance of the wave of arrests is also underlined in Kareklas, Hassanpoulia, op. cit., pp. 28 and 31.

avoid embarrassing demonstrations of mourning, they refused to hand over the bodies to their families but had them buried within the prison walls.

Cyprus' bandits, and their supporters, had made the effort of a pre-modern poor. Hobsbawm noted that these champions of peasant protest are helpless before the incomprehensible forces of the new society:

Still less can they understand what is happening to Sardinian villages that makes some men have plenty of cattle and others, who used to have a few, have none at all; that drives Calabrian villagers into American coal-mines, or fills the Carpathian mountains with armies, guns and debt.⁵⁸⁴

The Cypriots were in their collective memory well-aware of oppression by conquerors and by notables of their own tongue and faith. Banditry appeared as a response to painful social disruption at a time when the political consciousness of the labouring poor was fairly low and political movements had not arrived on the scene. Being themselves men of modest peasant stock, bandits became champions of an impotent and pre-political folk, who put their faith in those who righted wrongs and turned oppression upside down. However, by the 1890s, more effective forms of protest were increasingly being employed by the rural population. As the towns spread their ideology and organisation to the countryside, banditry left no heritage other than the memory of bold and tough men of the people, refusing to yield to force and social superiority.

584. Hobsbawm, Rebels, op. cit., p. 24.

CHAPTER 8

MORALIZING THE LABOUR FORCE

I. The Hysteria Against Masterless Men

The Cypriot establishment, conservative and also nationalist, was alarmed at the lawless tendencies of the plebeian strata. Limassol's Alithia made no attempt to discern the deeper causes of the crime wave but likened the situation to a reign of genuine anarchy and called for stricter measures by the authorities.⁵⁸⁵ Salpinx's judgement was more severe. The paper blamed the leniency of the courts for the continuing increase in the number of offenders. They were people who had parted with morality and in need of the Church to bring them back to the straight and narrow path.⁵⁸⁶ Larnaca's Enosis adopted an even more conservative stand. Engaging in nostalgia for Ottoman legal practices, the paper blamed the procedures applicable in the courts since the British occupation and their insistence on obtaining definite

585. See the articles in Alithia:

- a) "I englimatikotita kai i Kyvernisis" (Criminality and the Government), November 22, 1891;
- b) "Anarkhia" (Anarchy), December 12, 1893.

586. See the articles in Salpinx:

- a) "Diatl afxesan ai klopai" (The reason why the number of thefts has increased), June 20, 1887;
- b) "En tois dikasteriois zititaion to aition tis afxiseos ton englimaton" (The reasons why the number of crimes has increased should be sought in the courts of law), February 13, 1893;
- c) "I englimatikotis afxanei - Ierokyrikas! - Ierokyrikas!" (Criminality is on the increase - Preachers! - Preachers!), February 20, 1893.

evidence before pronouncing a defendant's guilt. The remedy lay not in Alithia's moralising exercises but in the salutary punishment of offenders and the banishment of their worst to Malta.⁵⁸⁷

The establishment had to explain not the age-old poverty of the labouring classes, but their novel pauperism and unruliness. Phoni tis Kyprou blamed what was viewed as the decadence introduced into Cyprus since the occupation, which had rendered mendicancy more agreeable than labour, an act of will, freely-chosen and therefore sinful:

It is common knowledge that most of our beggars practise this profession out of habit and laziness rather than poverty...

The police therefore ought to undertake appropriate measures forbidding them to beg, thereby ending this pestering and loathsome practice and also putting down laziness.⁵⁸⁸

Labour was painful; the poor therefore would, if tolerated by a negligent authority, turn not only to mendicancy but also to crime:

We cannot go along with the view that the Cypriot commits crimes because he lacks the means for his subsistence. No! He has definitely got the means for procuring his daily bread. Nor does he belong to the class of those unfortunate creatures which rot and decay in want and thereby succumb to the temptation of crime. Nine tenths of all crimes committed in Cyprus are a consequence of the moral degradation which has been established in our island with the onset of British rule.⁵⁸⁹

587. See the editorials of Enosis:

- a) "Klopai kai phonoi" (Thefts and murders), July 17, 1887;
- b) "Enghoria" (Internal affairs), September 11, 1887;
- c) "I alithis alithia" (Genuine truth), November 13, 1887.

588. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Oi epaitai" (Beggars), October 14, 1892.

589. Ibid., "Ta englimata par imin" (Crimes in our midst), October 4, 1891.

These were of course old and deeply-held, views on the unskilled labouring poor. In 1882 Larnaca's newspaper, Stasinós, wishing to be derogatory, referred to some of those trying to practise advocacy as being in fact "manual porters and market scum of all sorts and description [χειρωνάκτας αχθοφόρους και εν ενί λόγω καθάρματα της αγοράς παντός είδους]".⁵⁹⁰ At that time their numbers were nowhere so large as to cause alarm. However, following the crisis of 1887, the recurrent image of the establishment's propaganda was the multitude of disorderly youths in the streets, begging, thieving and causing a public nuisance. One of Phoni tis Kyprou's typical attacks on vagabondage was delivered in a full page editorial titled "Oi ayiopaides" (Street urchins). Groups of vagrant youths frequented the streets of the island's towns as poor imitations of Gavria, the hero of Hugo's Les Misérables. In fact the editorial focused not on any crimes committed by these youths, but on the unruly and libertarian aspects of their lives. Their greatest vice was their social indiscipline:

Have a walk in all the streets of the capital; you will see them being disorderly and throwing about insults and stones. Woe betide anyone who tries to talk reason and quiet into them. He will be met with a torrent of abuse and may feel on his back the awesome sticks which are habitually carried by them. You see this is one of the several liberties for which Her Divine Majesty's Government has granted to us. Everyone can do as he pleases.⁵⁹¹

590. Stasinós, May 24/6, 1882.

591. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Oi ayiopaides" (Street urchins), December 20, 1891.

Vagabondage was in fact being identified with political defiance to authority. This attitude was natural for the ruling class of a society in which every person lacking independent means had a master. In the editorial men without a master were viewed as offenders, not because of their actions but because of their status, which was at odds with the established order:

The police should make a daily round of the town, main streets and backstreets, and if they meet anyone from the vagabond class they ought to approach him and, after questioning him closely, they ought to take him into custody. There the police inspector should threaten him, advise him that he should not wander about without employment and conclude by granting him a time limit of a few days. At the conclusion of this time limit, should he still be found without employment he ought to be imprisoned or banished from the country.⁵⁹²

Not all editorials were so hysterical, though the conservative press was unanimous in stigmatising the new way of life that was being pursued by the lower classes. Salpinx described Cypriot society as drifting into the state of an incoherent crowd, lacking a common purpose and social bond.⁵⁹³ In going over the characteristics of the working class that met with censure, what was more striking was the comprehensiveness of the indictment. The attack covered every aspect of belief and behaviour - all their institutions, folklore, common sense and mentalities. An

592. Ibid.

593. Salpinx, "Ai asynartitai koinonai" (Ramshackle societies), April 14, 1891.

emergent jargon was perceived as a potential threat by Phoni tis Kyprou, which advocated corporal punishment against those who used obscene expressions in their daily talk:

We may be regarded as backward if we propose whipping as the most fitting punishment for these misdemeanours...It is well known that several indictable offences are committed with the excuse of the loathsome jokes, which are exchanged during filthy talk by the lower social classes. Hence, the enforcing of such a law, which punishes severely the usage of obscene words, would seal hermetically the source of most criminal acts.⁵⁹⁴

This new jargon amongst sections of the lower strata was associated with innovations in popular entertainment, through the performances of Karagiozi, a cunning and rogue-kind of hero of Greek and Turkish shadow theatre. Phoni tis Kyprou, protested that the police did not interfere with performances which were given every night "of Karagiozi and his morals, in low class Turkish cafes and even in dark huts, in front of one hundred juveniles of the people..."⁵⁹⁵ By the end of the century such developments were also evident in rural areas. Phoni tis Kyprou pointed to jam-packed coffee-shops through which gambling, lax morals and low class singers had infected the all-pure villages [τα αγνά, τα πύργα χωρία].⁵⁹⁶

594. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Anangaion nomothetima" (Requisite legislation), November 28/9, 1892.

595. Ibid., "I astynomia" (The police), July 1/13.1897.

596. Ibid., "Fovera mastix" (A terrible scourge), March, 10/23, 1901.

II. Labour Deference and Civil Obedience

In the political field, the conservative press viewed the labouring classes as inherently laden with obligations, which they had to be taught and learn to appreciate. Rights were not mentioned in any way. At the heart of this anxiety lay a deep fear of the implications of democracy, though the case against the doctrine was seldom argued. More often editorials abhorred the participation of the poor, who were told that they had no part to play in the making or administration of the law. For Enosis, the fact that some political contests were already being won by those who could muster the greatest number of votes, was tantamount to the ushering in of mob-rule [οχλαγωγίας]:

And here is how conferences take place nowadays; in front of the ballot box one sees a parade of tanners, porters, boatmen, labourers, carters, road sweepers, children of no age...These are the conferences of nowadays! Shambles, chaos, misunderstandings, disappointment, disgust, such are their evil consequences of victory by ballot against respectable and decent people...⁵⁹⁷

The idea that the labouring poor were to be consulted in public affairs was opposed and ridiculed outright. The people judging things by their own reason, could only result in a reckless course in social and civil life. In a front page editorial Enosis commented with dismay:

During the present stage of civilisation everything has changed for the worse...An equality of unequals is reigning everywhere, which handicaps progress and ruins every activity in pursuit of good deeds. A scientist, a

597. Enosis, "I koinoniki imon athliotis kai tines oi ker-dizondes simeron kata tas psifoforias" (The misery of our communal affairs and those who win ballots today), April 28/9, 1887.

merchant, a manual worker in the vulgar crafts, a dock labourer, are all equal, enjoying the same rights, possessing the same knowledge and expressing opinions on an equal basis, on every issue... Could there ever be a more miserable state of affairs?⁵⁹⁸

The labouring poor therefore should not busy themselves in the concerns of government. They should do their own business not the country's. The less they attempted to interfere in matters which were too high for them the better. Apart from harsh punishments, the poor were of course in need of teaching and guidance, given that traditional means of instructing the mass of the population in their social duties were ceasing to be effective. Thus the 1890s witnessed a resurgent interest in the enforcement of Sunday observance. The establishment lamented the growing unruliness and inconvenience of recreations and commercial activities engaged in, chiefly on Sundays, by sections of the labouring population. The Czarist practice of obliging the Russian poor to attend church, was praised by Salpinx:

Who is going to impose this measure with the cane?
Oh Holy Russia, why do you not have power over all
Christians and put them in line with the whip since the
gospel of Christ and his teaching have become
antiquated?⁵⁹⁹

The British authorities would obviously not hear of such tactics, though the employing classes might be willing to bear the moralising burden. Enosis reproduced an article from the Athenian press which should serve as an example to Cypriots:

598. Ibid., "I ton koinotikon mas katastasis" (The state of our communal affairs), December 5, 1892.

599. Salpinx, "I Kyriaki mas" (Our Sunday), November 5, 1892.

All the owners of bakeries were forced to lead the workers employed by them to Holy Mass every Sunday and to impose the penalty of dismissal on those not willing to abide by this decree of their employers. This is a splendid decision which proves that this class of our fellow citizens is imbued with lively religious feeling.⁶⁰⁰

A selective interpretation of religion continued to play a major role in harnessing the attitudes of the population. The subject of poverty was referred to in many articles in the press, with a large measure of agreement on it: it was in the order of nature. Finding faults with distinctions of rank, was tantamount to questioning the dispensations of God's providence. Social conflict was abominable because it challenged the divine origins of the social structure. Phoni tis Kyprou summed up the reasons why the poor should be conditioned not to try to better their lot:

Man, having peered into and studied the lowest sections of society, has recognised those ulcers which keep social classes at loggerheads, arouse instincts and emulate themselves in raising men against each other and realised that the most drastic of medicines was teaching, education, science, which he called in one word "light" [φως]...The foremost slogan cried out by nations once they become enlightened is: "Down with desiring the possessions of others". Is it not a fact that this cry instils in every soul the concept of the realm of Freedom?

The editorial hinged on the traditional argument that Christianity could make the poor man rich by furnishing him with the invaluable wealth of contentment. Earthly distinctions were petty and cast into shade in the presence of God. Religious education could draw men closer to their maker and elevate them

600. Enosis, "I kataptosis tou thriskeftikou aisthimatos" (The collapse of religious sentiment), August 10, 1894

to heavenly heights for which they were really destined. That is where material interest ends and self-denial begins. That is where subjection is overthrown and equality sets in. That is where there is no need of either laws or tribunals. That is where there is neither usurer nor debtor. That is where man, the structure, tends to resemble his maker.

People should in fact^{be} educated to bear their poverty and such education should be specific in its doctrines and should be provided to the base by the capital of the social column:

Our religious and political leaders, whose job is to cater for the needs of the people - when we mention the people we mean the ignorant and blind crowd - ought in fact to achieve these miracles...The only way this light might shine is through a school for workers.⁶⁰¹

Educating the labouring poor was therefore becoming a task of primary political significance. The marked feature of all pronouncements in this field was that religious principles provided the only solid foundations for civic culture:

The people must become accustomed to reading, the Holy Scripture in particular, and other books of a moral and religious content, because primarily we are in need of moral uplifting...Universal suffrage presupposes educated citizens, capable of choosing and preferring. And election presupposes enlightenment and knowledge of good from evil...⁶⁰²

The opinions of the lower strata had thereafter to be taken into some consideration by the establishment. This realisation was epitomised by the founding, in February 1891, of a new club in Nicosia, Agapi tou Laou (Love of the people). According to

601. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Phos kai phos - Scholeion ton ergaton" (The need for enlightenment - A school for workers), June 9, 1895.

602. Ibid., "O laos prepei na ethisthei ina anaghinoskei" (The people must be conditioned to read), October 13/25, 1893.

Phoni tis Kyprou the club's purpose was "the cultivation of letters and the moral re-education [αναμόρφωσις] of good citizens".⁶⁰³ A letter under the pseudonym of Philopolis, in Phoni tis Kyprou, referred to the club as a meeting place for the people [λαϊκόν εντευκτήριον].⁶⁰⁴ Unlike the elitist Kypriakos Syllogos, where a "members only" policy was adopted, the new club was open to all, including those who could not afford the subscription fee. Article one of the constitution defined the club's major aim as "the teaching of reading and writing to illiterates who are already practising any trade, whether they be members of the Reading Club or not". Their intellectual development was catered for "through the teaching and reading aloud of beneficial lessons...the fraternal behaviour of one member to another...the transmission of knowledge (and) the setting up of a library".⁶⁰⁵

For all references to the people however the club was headed by establishment figures: the President, George Nicopoulos, was editor of Phoni tis Kyprou, the Treasurer, Joannis Vergopoulos, owned a tobacco factory and Committee member Joannis Hadjigavriel was the son of Nicosia's greatest shoe manufacturer.⁶⁰⁶ As in the

603. Ibid., "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), March 22/6, 1891.

604. Ibid., "Kyrie syndacta" (To the editor), March 2/14, 1891.

605. Kanonismos tou en Lefkosia Kyprou anagnosteriou "I Agapi tou Laou", (Constitution of Nicosia's reading club I Agapi tou Laou), Nicosia, 1893, p. 3.

The constitution had been revised on December 29, 1892; no copy of the first constitution, of 1891, has been found.

606. See the names of the Committee members in Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), March 6, 1891. For the social position of G. Vergopoulos and J. Nicopoulos see Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., pp. 31 and 167 respectively.

case of Kypriakos Syllogos, the movement of ideas in Agapi tou Laou was firmly under the control of the Committee and the President who had, by article 65, discretion over allowing lectures and discussions "touching upon political or religious regimes".⁶⁰⁷ Unlike Kypriakos Syllogos, however, which declared aloofness from political activities, Agapi tou Laou seemed prepared to keep in touch with the increasingly politicized times. Greek National Day, March 25, was set as the new club's day of celebration.⁶⁰⁸ By the following year, article 61 of the revised constitution referred to March 25 as "the day of celebration of the whole of Hellenism's struggles for emancipation, sanctified in the memory of the Annunciation".⁶⁰⁹ In a community which was beginning to be strained by ideological divisions, the club's leadership was a worthwhile prize for aspirants to public office. At the next Committee elections, in March 1892, Achilleas Liassides became the new President.⁶¹⁰ In this post he would cohabit for another five years with the more nationalist members of the committee.

It was natural that a club such as Agapi tou Laou, clearly meant to serve the interests of the conservative wing of Cypriot politics, would first be founded in Nicosia. Such schools even-

607. Kanonismos Agapi Laou, op. cit., p. 17.

608. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), May 8, 1891.

609. Kanonismos Agapi Laou, op. cit., p. 18.

610. Evagoras, February 19, 1892.

tually spread to other towns. On January 4, 1897, Limassol's Salpinx praised Isotis, the town's conservative reading club, for setting up a school whose aim was the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic, twice or thrice a week to working people.⁶¹¹ Such schools were clearly intended to confront the insubordinate culture which was being projected by the labouring poor, the younger generation in particular. Conservative attitudes toward parents, indicated that they too were distrusted because they might be infected by radical influences. Contrasting the institution of the reading club to that of the school, Salpinx and the conservative circle of Isotis club in Limassol, abandoned the pretension of pursuing a literacy campaign. Working class schools need provide no education in a formal sense, but moral instruction instead:

In these reading clubs the ignorant will not become literate. Education has little to do with literacy. It is possible for the literate to commit the most immoral and criminal of offences just as it is equally conceivable for the illiterate to rank amongst the most ethical and honest of men. Inside the reading club the illiterate will attend lectures and debates on several worldly matters, will become thoroughly acquainted with things concerning his fatherland, will develop an interest in finding out about a lot of things he does not know, will take lessons of a moral and ethical content, will formulate correct views on all matters...Such is the way to the education of the heart.⁶¹²

611. Salpinx, "Laika scholeia" (Schools for common people), January 4, 1897.

612. Ibid., "Ai opheliai ton anagnostirion" (The benefits of reading clubs), June 15, 1898.

III. Labour Associations and their Purpose

Equally ominous, from the establishment's point of view, was the evidence of growing dissatisfaction amongst the better-off sections of the labouring classes, i.e. the skilled artisans, and even the master-craftsmen. The respectable section of the labour force might, under the stress of prolonged unemployment, throw in their lot with the casual poor and even follow the slogans of the nationalist opposition. Nearly all sections of the labouring population, had failed to exert a coherent defensive effort against the worst consequences of the crisis. Having hardly ever before experienced such a predicament, they had failed to develop those traditions, and institutions, which would help them help themselves. The sole exception to this failure was to be the uppermost section of the working population, the master-craftsmen. Though the end of Ottoman rule had plunged trade associations into morass and decay, in equal measure their revival, albeit in a different form, was to be a response to the crisis of 1887-1889. Charity could not be a lasting solution to the predicament of craftsmen and could certainly not maintain them in their independent status. These tradesmen therefore tried to insure themselves by forming voluntary organisations, which came to be known by a variety of names: adelphotites (brotherhoods), syndesmoi apotamiefseos (saving societies) and even syntekhniai (guilds). In the same way that their European counterparts, the British "friendly societies" and the French confréries, were direct descendants of guild organisations, Cypriot labour associations,

into which members contributed regularly and from which they hoped to derive certain benefits, constituted an obvious element of continuity with the esnafs of the Ottoman period.

It was natural that such associations would first spring up amongst craftsmen, who could draw on their rudimentary trade consciousness and discipline required for the formation of organisations and the holding of meetings. The aspirations and political awareness of this stratum, which were higher than those of the unskilled rabble, dictated self-help as the only alternative to the demoralisation which tormented most of the labouring population. The first response of syntekhnia activity to the economic crisis was noted through the columns of the Limassol press. On April 16, 1888, Alithia noted:

The syntekhnia of barrel-makers of our town has formed an association, under the presidency of Mr Michael Tornarites, which aims towards the mutual aid of the various members of the syntekhnia. The example given by the barrel-makers should be followed by the other syntekhniai of our town.⁶¹³

The editor who declared himself so favourably towards the barrel-makers' initiative was Aristotelis Palaiologos, from a family of Constantinople Greeks, and president of the club Isotis, which encompassed the most prominent members of Limassol's Greek community.⁶¹⁴ Salpinx, being the more conservative of Limassol's newspapers, was even more explicit in praising

613. Alithia, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), April 16, 1888.

614. For a brief biography of A. Palaiologos see Aristodimos Pilavakis, I Lemesos kai ta scholeia tis, Limassol, 1929, pp. 103-104.

the artisans' initiative:

A barrel-makers' syntekhnia has been formed in our town, headed by Mr. Michael Tornaritis. Syntekhniai serve a good purpose because through them labour is regulated more appropriately and is guided, as if by a steering wheel, for the promotion of the interests of the members. We wish success to the gentlemen of the barrel-makers syntekhnia.⁶¹⁵

This mode of reporting was also another indication of the conservative establishment's approval of this sort of syntekhnia. The editor of Salpinx, Stylianos Hourmouzios, had, apart from running one of the town's two newspapers, also been a lawyer and master of Ayia Napa church school.⁶¹⁶ Syntekhniai were thereafter to be the only form of labour associations approved, or tolerated, by the establishment. By joining these societies, skilled artisans were expected to seek redress to the problems of their social situation through the corporate regularity of bygone times and to conduct themselves with respectability. Limassol's elite were of course informed of the unmanageable attitudes of labour in other parts of the world. The press reported on the waves of strikes in France, Italy and Russia and the menace of syndicalism and anarchism, which had their hey-day in Europe towards the end of the century. Labour brotherhoods were therefore expected to become alternatives to such things as trade-union bodies. At the same time practically nothing was reported

615. Salpinx, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), April 9, 1888.

616. For a biography of S. Hourmouzios see Costas Pilavakis, I Lemesos se allous kairous (Limassol in another age), Limassol, 1977, p. 167.

on the activity of these brotherhoods, indicating that they disintegrated very rapidly. The only syntekhnia which seems to have lasted for a while was that of Limassol's shoemakers, founded in November 1889, with the declared aim of mutual aid. The aims of the syntekhnia were described in Alithia:

Each shoemaker contributes every Saturday the sum of one penny, or more, towards the Brotherhood's fund. The treasurer along with the committee of the said Brotherhood have the right to provide the member in need with financial aid, drugs and medical care.

As in the case of the barrel-makers, the editor praised the founders of the shoemakers' syntekhnia and urged the other syntekhniai to follow the shoemakers' example.⁶¹⁷ The response of Limassol's shoemakers to the syntekhnia was in fact quite positive. 38 weeks later the union's account books showed an entry of 714 pence.⁶¹⁸ This allows a rough estimate of a membership of about 18, which must have been a sizeable portion of the town's shoemakers. The union's funds could however hardly keep up with the membership's demands, which amounted, according to the same accounts, to a deduction of 698 pence.⁶¹⁹

Trade-associations were at the same time spreading all over the island. Limassol's Salpinx commented: "We are pleased to note the tendency of the people of Nicosia, which has been adopted a short while ago, to form associations aiming towards the common

617. Alithia, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), December 23, 1889.

618. Ibid., "Syntekhnia ypodimatopeion" (Syntekhnia of shoemakers), September 7, 1890.

619. Ibid.

good". The paper added, without going into detail, that several associations and syntekhniai had already been established in other towns.⁶²⁰ The membership of these associations could be described as the local aristocracy of labour. They were mostly master-craftsmen, though it is probable that some skilled journeymen joined, who would, in good years, make ends meet in relative comfort and whose income was regular and high enough to warrant weekly subscriptions. Hence K. Eliades, president and treasurer of Limassol's shoemakers' union, was an independent craftsman, occupying the premises of his trade. He had also been an employer of labour, prosperous enough to ask for skilled artisans, from Cyprus or abroad, through the columns of the local press.⁶²¹

The propensity of the upper stratum of town labour towards the formation of associations was also exemplified by the unlikely profession of servants. On May 26, 1890, Salpinx reported the formation, in Nicosia, of an association of servants, going by the title of Elpis. Each member would undertake to contribute a monthly subscription, depending on the level of his salary and not exceeding two shillings.⁶²² Elpis must have been an association of well-paid servants, employed in wealthy households. This explains the use of the term salary [μισθός] instead of wage, and

620. Salpinx, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), May 26, 1890.

621. See his advertisement in Alithia, "Eidopoiiseis" (Notifications), November 11, 1886.

622. Salpinx, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), May 26, 1890.

also the very high level of subscriptions, at two shillings being roughly four times the amount paid by Limassol's shoemakers. As was the norm with all voluntary associations of the time, the purpose of Elpis was "to offer help and relief to those members who might in the future find themselves in straitened circumstances owing to unemployment or incapacity to work".⁶²³

Generally syntekhniai activities received a poor coverage by the press. These associations were regarded, and were indeed, very ephemeral associations. Shortage of funds became critical owing to actuarial inexperience. However the most serious problem undermining these feeble and fluctuating structures, was the lack of any but the most rudimentary union consciousness. Labour associations of the period were riven by personal jealousies and rivalries. Hence, in September 1890, the members of Limassol's shoemakers' union were reported to be arguing amongst themselves over the management of the union's funds.⁶²⁴ At the time, this union, whose activities were the most well-covered of the period, had been in existence for barely eight months; two weeks later it collapsed and the president had to make public the brotherhood's account books in an effort to silence recriminations against him.⁶²⁵

623. Ibid.

624. Alithia, September 7, 1890.

625. Salpinx, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), September 20.

Until the end of the 1880s, the formation of syntekhniai had been particularly sporadic and the political significance of organised labour, such as it was in the period, had amounted to nil. In Nicosia, the tendency towards the formation of syntekhniai, which had been noted in 1890 by Salpinx, appears to have continued throughout the following year. In 1891 the aforementioned Nicolaos Hadjisavvas, owner of the largest cafe frequented by the labouring classes, initiated the unification of the capital's various syntekhniai into a single brotherhood.⁶²⁶ This process was a contradictory development. On the one hand it represented a break with the guild tradition, according to which trades were distinct and ought to remain as such. Devotion to craft had been eroded to such an extent, as to allow the enrolment of different trade-associations into an all-embracing one. At the same time this amalgamation was devoid of any autonomous class initiative; in fact personal economic interest probably loomed large in N. Hadjisavva's motives. The press of Nicosia did not report any activities of this unified brotherhood in promoting the interests of the members; if any such activities did take place they must have been along the lines of mutuality, preached by the established leadership of the community.

626. This information was given in passing one year later in Evagoras, "Adelphotis syntekhnion" (A brotherhood of syntekhniai), December 2, 1892.

An appropriate editorial, on the subject of organised labour, was carried by Phoni tis Kyprou on September 2, 1892. The article, though titled Ergatikoi Syndesmoi (Labour Associations), steered clear of class connotations. The existence of such associations was traced as far back as antiquity, and down through the Middle Ages during which time the syntekhniai were presented as organisations, whose main function was to defend the interests of tradesmen against the exploitation of the nobility. This was an appeal to the guild-spirit of the burghers. According to the editorial, the contemporary functions of the syntekhniai ought to be catering to needy and aged union-members and the perfection of craftsmanship. The syntekhniai were also expected to facilitate the founding of a school and thereby promote technical knowledge as well as moral education, through which the working classes would appreciate their obligations towards society and the motherland.⁶²⁷ Though the period was one of unprecedented economic and social convulsions, no tendency was indicated on the part of the syntekhniai to protest against the situation of their members. What is more, though a national sentiment was being clearly manifested in the lower strata, and though a national movement was visibly in the making, not a single report of the activities of these syntekhniai indicated an anti-government spirit. This non-political attitude of the syntekhniai was consolidated, when these bodies gradually came, like their esnaf

627. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Ergatikoi Syndesmoi" (Labour Associations), September 2, 1892.

predecessors, to be associated with the Church. The first activity of the brotherhood of syntekhniai to be mentioned in the press, was their celebration of Saint Andreas' nameday in the church of Trypiotis. Evagoras reported:

The brotherhood of syntekhniai of our town which has been founded as a result of the initiative of Mr. Nicolaos Hadjisavvas has financed, through the collection of subscriptions, the building of a splendid shrine and the making of a fine silver candle devoted to Saint Andreas. The brotherhood has also organised a magnificent celebration of the Saint's nameday in the church of Trypiotis on November 30. We congratulate the members of the brotherhood on their Christian sentiments.⁶²⁸

The following year, 1893, the celebration was held again, and was once more acclaimed in the press. By the time of Saint Andreas' day in 1894, it had, according to Phoni tis Kyprou, become a customary event:

An immense crowd [ἀπειρον πλήθος] thronged in the church of Trypiotis, largely made up of artisans, who have indeed made several offerings and who make monthly contributions, to the measure of their ability, to the church's funds. These activities of the syntekhniai and their earnest devotion to religion are truly worthy of every praise.⁶²⁹

By the following year's celebration, devout syntekhniai members had subscribed enough to decorate the Saint's picture with a silver enamel.⁶³⁰ Constant reminders to the syntekhniai of their

628. Evagoras, "Adelphotis" op. cit..

629. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Epi ti eorti tou Apostolou Andreou" (On the day of Saint Andreas), December 2/14, 1894.

630. Ibid., "Khronika" (Chronicles), November 22, 1895.

This information is also engraved at the bottom of the icon which is kept in the left-side shrine of Trypiotis church in Nicosia.

religious obligations were not fruitless. One week after Saint Andreas' day, Phoni tis Kyprou commented on the sequence of holy days in early December: Santa Barbara, Saint Savvas, Saint Nicholas, Saint Spyridon and others. "Those who took care to observe these holy days - most of them being artisans - did not work thus honoring the memory of the sacred martyrs..."⁶³¹ Syntekhniai attachment to the Church was also being encouraged in other towns. On December 16, 1894, Phoni tis Kyprou reported that, in Famagusta, the masons' syntekhnia had once more celebrated in a magnificent manner the name-day of Saint Nicholas. The syntekhnia had been saving for years in order to found a church near the sea.⁶³² By March of the following year the church of the Holy Spirit had been erected on the beach of Glossa, with the labour of the masons' syntekhnia and of several other artisans, as well as the contribution of 4,000 stone blocks by the Government.⁶³³

Such an attachment to religion by the trade unions was more pronounced in Nicosia and Famagusta, where traditional values were more resilient. In Limassol however, in spite of it being the most proletarian town of the island, the nearest thing to

631. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Poikilai selidai" (Miscellaneous news items), December 21, 1894.

632. Ibid., "Eorti syntekhnias" (A syntekhnia celebration), December 16/28, 1894.

633. Salpinx, March 4, 1895. The paper mentioned one of the town's largest property owners, G. H. Hadjipetro, as one of the major contributors in this effort.

such a religious celebration was only inaugurated in December 1894. Even then the initiative belonged not to craftsmen but to the unlikely occupation of captains of boats [πλοίαρχοι] who revived, on December 6, the celebration of the day of Saint Nicholas, patron of seamen. Reporting the event, Salpinx, the local mouthpiece of the conservatives, complained of the absence of religious fervour among the rest of the town's labouring population and noted:

Everywhere syntekhniai have their own celebrations. It is only here that we do not observe this good habit, which we recommend to Messrs. Shoemakers, Carpenters, Tailors e.t.c. Why should they be lagging behind their colleagues in other towns?⁶³⁴

One month later an editorial in Neon Ethnos, Larnaca's new and nationalist newspaper, responded to Salpinx's urge toward the formation of syntekhniai. The editorial referred to the benefits of mutuality, the perfection of crafts and an overall, but undefined, contribution of labour in curing the evils of society;⁶³⁵ however, no mention was made of religion. At a time when the Church loomed large in all manifestations of social life, this omission was most probably due to the fact that the editor of Neon Ethnos, Philios Zannetos, was a leading freemason. In fact Larnaca's working population, like their counterparts in Limassol, had been failing to demonstrate sufficient attachment to the Church. In December 1897, by which time nationalism posed

634. Ibid., "Eorti syntekhnion" (A celebration of syntekhniai), December 12, 1894.

635. Neon Ethnos, "Syntekhniai", January 7/19, 1895.

a clear threat to the elite's position, Enosis, Larnaca's conservative newspaper, praised the celebration of Saint Andreas' day by the syntekhniai of Nicosia and called upon Larnaca's boatmen and porters to celebrate Saint Nicholas' day. The paper noted that in previous years the town's syntekhniai, "full of modesty and joy", had been holding a splendid celebration on that day.⁶³⁶

Inculcating desirable virtues into the labouring poor in general, and the syntekhniai in particular, was not left to the Church alone. The influence of the only secondary education establishment in the island, the Pancyprian Gymnasium, founded in 1893, was also brought to bear. On October 3 of that year, the master of religious instruction, Spyridon Spyridakis, delivered his first sermon in the church of Phaneromeni. According to Phoni tis Kyprou:

Mr. Spyridakis elaborated, using a language that was rather simple and easy to comprehend, on the mutual obligations of the people and the way in which they should express their love towards their neighbour. Needless to say, these moral exhortations are beneficial to the people.⁶³⁷

A month later the paper reported, in a similarly approving manner, that Spyridakis had preached from the gospel in the church of Ayios Joannis. By that time, such sermons in the churches of the capital had been placed on a regular footing.⁶³⁸

636. Enosis - Supplement, "Eorti syntekhnion" (A celebration of syntekhniai), December 27/9, 1897.

637. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Kyrigma thiou logou" (The preaching of the divine word), October 6, 1893.

638. Ibid., "Thion kyrigma" (A divine preaching), November 3, 1893.

The impact of this preaching on the congregation cannot have been negligible. Spyridakis was no ordinary preacher, being a Greek citizen, a graduate of the Rizaris Seminary*⁶³⁹ and the Theology Faculty of the University of Athens, who also held the post of religious instruction at the newly-founded Gymnasium.⁶⁴⁰ Nicolaos Hadjisavvas, who was closely associated to the tradesmen of Nicosia, invited Spyridakis to deliver a sermon to the syntekhniai, during their customary celebration of Saint Andreas' day, on November 30. The celebration was carried out with appropriate splendour in the church of Trypiotis and, after mass was held and the sermon delivered, the syntekhniai treated their guests to a meal in the church's assembly hall.⁶⁴¹

During his sermon S. Spyridakis, having pointed out that hitherto the sole concerted activity of the Nicosia syntekhniai had been the celebration of the Saint's nameday, urged the expansion of their association, which should encompass all of the town's syntekhniai. Not surprisingly, the preacher dwelled on the need for the moral uplifting of the membership. Apart from the purpose of mutual aid, the association was to examine the quality of the commodities produced by individual members. Should these products be found wanting in this respect, the association should

639. * The divinity school of the Church of Greece.

640. Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., p. 223.

641. For a description of the celebration see Evagoras, "Eorti syntekhnion - Arkhieratiki litourgia" (A celebration of syntekhniai - An episcopal mass), December 1, 1893.

convince the member in question to change his trade. In a way, the sermon was in line with the interests of the established craftsmen, who had mastered the skills of their trade and had also had possession of the necessary premises and tools for the production of articles of good quality. Those members of the association who were to be "convinced" to leave their trade were mostly to be found amongst young artisans, who were not anymore barred from entering the trade by esnaf regulations and were thereby in competition with the established master-craftsmen.⁶⁴²

The Greek elite of Nicosia appreciated the value of such preachers. Though Spyridakis had already preached the gospel in several churches, his sermon to the syntekhniai was the first to be published in the press. The following Sunday, Spyridakis was invited for yet another sermon in the church of Saint Savvas, to be delivered after mass had been held by the Archbishop himself. Apart from the celebration of Saint Andreas' day, artisan association with the clergy was further enhanced in 1895, when the church of Phaneromeni began to celebrate Saint Spyridon's day, on December 11. Though this had not been from the outset a purely artisan affair, by 1899 Phoni tis Kyprou described the event as "the annual celebration organised by a number of syntekhniai".⁶⁴³ The church of Phaneromeni boasted of the wealthiest congregation

642. See the full text of the sermon in ibid., "I en tois naois didaskalia" (Preaching in churches), December 1, 1893.

643. Phoni tis Kyprou, "O cosmos" (The world), December 9/21, 1899.

in Nicosia and though the syntekhniai had not, from the beginning, been the sole organisers in this celebration, their participation was in itself significant. On December 14, 1898, Phonitis Kyprou reported that the organising committee had, during the previous three years, collected enough donations from the pious to build a magnificent throne with the august picture of Saint Spyridon. During the previous week mass for the annual celebration had been held by Archbishop Sophronios and Kyrillos, Bishop of Kyrenia. In attendance were the entire priesthood of the capital in their vestments.⁶⁴⁴

The 1890s witnessed a major attempt for the revival of the syntekhniai system. The establishment were, by that time, fighting a rearguard action to maintain the values of the corporate social system. The end of the esnafis had meant the end of clearly defined relationships, attitudes and expectations amongst masters on the one hand, and journeymen and apprentices, on the other. The rejuvenation of syntekhniai would, it was hoped, keep the latter's insubordination under control.

644. Ibid., "Paneyirismos Ierarkhou Spyridonos" (The celebration of Bishop Spyridon), December 14/26, 1898.

CHAPTER 9

A CHANGING SOCIETY

I. The Rise of a New Middle Class

Between April 4th, 1881 and March 31st, 1901 Cyprus' population grew from 186,173 to 237,022, a rise of 27.6%. This meant not only more people but also a very different age structure. By 1901 54.1% of Cypriot men and women were under 25 years of age;⁶⁴⁵ these youths had known nothing of Ottoman rule and were naturally uniquely receptive to new ideas and forms of social organization and political conduct. Geographically remote regions and communities were drawn into relations with the towns, as centres of economic and political activity. Having largely in mind the strategic significance of the island, the British paid great attention to the construction of an efficient communication system. Within a year of the new administration, carriageable roads connected Nicosia to Famagusta and Kyrenia, Larnaca to Mathiati and Limassol to Mount Troodos.⁶⁴⁶ By 1882, a total of 356 miles of roads, though some of them of poor quality, had been constructed.⁶⁴⁷ Rural distress and the need for relief works kept up this momentum during the late 1880s and the 1890s until, by early 1902, good public roads stretched throughout Cyprus for 628

645. Census 1901, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

646. Cyprus Report, 1879, op. cit., Major General Biddulph to the Marquis of Salisbury, January 15, 1880, p. 22.

647. A Monograph, op. cit., p. 4.

miles. The proportion of road mileage to square miles of country, 1:57, meant that Cyprus had one of the best road networks of countries administered by the British Crown.⁶⁴⁸

The development of a communication system, greatly facilitated the expansion of internal economic activity. A major boost in this direction, was also given by the standardisation of the currency. The assortment of a constantly debased Ottoman coinage - gold and silver medjidie, metallic and copper coins and the nearly worthless caime (paper currency) - was phased out of circulation. In its place, the Government introduced as legal tender English currency, the gold pound sterling and the silver shilling. Copper Cyprus piastres were also issued for petty transactions.⁶⁴⁹ After the great boost of the first two years of British administration, the growth rate of the economy and of the commercial sector became more modest due to the deadening effect of the Tribute; by 1900 the volume of trade had increased to £675,222 (364,092 + 311,130), that is by another 27.3%.⁶⁵⁰

The expansion in the volume of external trade, though remaining largely under the overall control of the big established merchants, also gave scope for the emergence of newcomers, from Nicosia's, and especially Limassol's, growing middle classes. At

648. Ibid., p. vii.

649. Christophis Economides, "Historia tou khrimatos stin Kypro [1571-1960]" (History of money in Cyprus), Praktika kypriologikou, 1987, op. cit., p. 609.

650. [Cd. 937], Cyprus - Report for 1900-1901, London, 1902, pp. 17-21.

the same time, the manufacturing sector of the economy grew much more rapidly. According to the first available figures, in the Blue Book of 1880, the major units of industry were three tanneries, three tobacco factories, ten steam and flour mills and two distilleries.⁶⁵¹ By 1900, the number of tanneries had grown to 13, tobacco factories to eight, steam mills to 26 and distilleries to 21. There were moreover, 42 steam powered cotton gins, ten engines of unspecified use, ten printing-presses and manufactures of bricks, soap, gypsum, mineral water and macaroni. The expansion in the wine trade alone had meant the establishment of nearly 400 wine-presses. The centre of this proto-industrialisation was Limassol, whose economy also benefited from the stationing of British troops in the district. Larnaca and Nicosia, followed by Famagusta and Paphos, were also developing a manufacturing base, although still relying in different degrees on the power of water and wind. Kyrenia remained the most backward district, where the first and only steam-powered olive mill, established in 1895, was until the end of the century, a solitary sign of mechanisation.⁶⁵²

On an island-wide basis, economic growth had to a large extent been the product of private enterprise; apart from the established merchants and owners of major workshops and manufactures, considerable economic benefit accrued to increasingly

651. Blue Book 1880, op. cit., p. 350.

652. For the listing and distribution of manufacturing units see the Cyprus Blue Book 1900-1901, Nicosia, 1902, pp. 392-402.

larger numbers of petty craftsmen and retailers in imported and home-produced commodities. Along the new road system, larger loads of merchandise could be carried over longer distances in a shorter space of time, stimulating a veritable revolution in trading; the interior could be opened up to the trader more easily; the village store could be set up and constantly restocked. From the mass of petty tradesmen there began to appear a class of more substantial men. They were characterised by mobility, possessing a winter base in town and mule and cart. Enjoying low operating costs, they could call on customers over wide areas. The poorest, those rubbing shoulders with gypsies and even beggars, could also be mobile by selling anything that could be transported on their backs. The traditional and corporate fabric of Cypriot society was therefore beginning to crack in places. Had occupation statistics been available for the first census, in 1881, the transformation in this field, viewed over a longer time-span, would be more obvious. Still the trends are clear enough. Comparisons between 1891 and 1901 reveal a rapid expansion in internal traffic and trading activity. Cartmakers, basket makers, drivers of carts and pedlars, increased from 324 in 1891 to 975 in 1901. Street vendors, who were not listed at all in 1891, numbered 81 in 1901.⁶⁵³

653. See the returns of occupation in the censuses of 1891 and 1901, pp. 50 and 54-55 respectively.

If long journeys were rare, a less ambitious itinerary was followed by many wandering professionals - traders attending fairs, agents and porters, the growing number of messengers between one town and the next, youths leaving to serve their apprenticeships. Men and women, especially during times of want, journeyed to the towns in great numbers to labour in whatever they could find. All of these commuters could benefit from the alertness consequent upon movement; a section of them would become embodiments of change. Developing urbanization and internal migration eroded local speech patterns and above all local mentalities. Inhabitants of remote villages or valleys, making full sense of their being part of a larger, island entity, were well on the way towards identifying with an even more embracing national realm. Between the second and third census, from April 1891 to April 1901, the population of the island expanded from 209,286 persons to 237,022, thereby increasing by 13.27%. Over the same decade the percentage of persons returning occupations increased nearly twice as fast, from 54,863 to 68,417 or 24.7%. The combined number of farmers and gardeners, the most conservative section of any country's population, went down from 15,936 to 15,245, registering an absolute decrease of 4.3%. By comparison the number of persons engaged in manufacture increased from 5,774 to 7,458 (29.2%).⁶⁵⁴

654. The figures have been worked out from the schedules of occupation in the censuses of 1891 and 1901, pp. 50 and 54-55 respectively.

These changes represented a considerable shift of population from the environs of the natural economy of the countryside to the towns, even to townships of moderate size. From the first census, in March 1881, to the third in April 1901, the number of settlements whose population exceeded 1,000 rose from 18 to 29 and their total population increased from 49,686 to 74,256, an increase of 49.5%.⁶⁵⁵ Though the figure of 1,000 inhabitants does not, to modern eyes, count as a town, in the context of Cyprus during the last decade of the 19th century, and in contrast to the backwardness of the rural hinterland, these settlements had some urban attributes. Their inhabitants, engaging in trading, manufacturing and administrative activities were generally more literate, alert and skilled on political matters than the peasantry and more inclined to resist the predominance of the clergy and the traditional elite.

The most important matter influencing the field of politics seemed to be not sheer concentration of the population but rather the development of manufactures and commerce and of their typical personnel. Towns such as Kyrenia, which lacked commerce and industry and were the seats of important landed families, remained strongholds of conservatism. Over the same period, centred in Limassol, a new trading and manufacturing, though not as yet industrial, bourgeoisie was already in the making, next to the

655. The percentage has been worked out from the statistics available in the censuses of 1881, p. 8 and 1901, p. 7.

landed gentry and merchant establishment. A Cypriot who had left the island at the time of Ottoman rule noted the changes of his bourgeois compatriots in Limassol in 1889:

Along the Marina I passed a number of stores, each well-stocked with goods quite foreign to Cyprus, and also many well-arranged cafes and restaurants. I next turned my attention to the people; I found them better dressed, the ladies wearing bonnets, gloves and costumes of the most approved European fashions. I next saw, seated in a carriage, a gentleman in evening dress, wearing white kid gloves and a tall hat. I recognised in him an old acquaintance and on hailing him found he was going to a dinner party. All these things were never dreamt of in Cyprus, when I bade farewell to it a few years before the British Occupation.⁶⁵⁶

A feature in the evolution of this new class was the number of university graduates who began arriving in the island. Though in 1878, there were no more than a handful of doctors and lawyers at the time of the first occupational census, in 1891, there were 27 and 36 of them respectively.⁶⁵⁷ By 1901 these numbers had grown to 35 and 54.⁶⁵⁸ Their numbers were not, in absolute terms, excessive for an island of 237,000. Yet their increase was met with ill-concealed anxiety by the establishment press. On January 19, 1891, Salpinx, having observed that the labouring poor were useful because they were the ones who engaged in manual trades, added that in contrast to the time of the British occupation

656. The Owl, "The Return of the Cypriot", October 13, 1889.

657. Census 1891, op. cit., p. 50.

658. Census 1901, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

there was now nearly a glut of people who had received a higher education and that the great majority of those who studied abroad became doctors and lawyers.⁶⁵⁹

Phoni tis Kyprou, drew similar conclusions in November 11, 1892, in an article contrasting the situation with that existing ten years earlier:

Although in the past Cypriot scholars could be counted upon the fingers of one hand, today we have a multitude of such scientists and, after a short while, our island will not be lagging behind either Samos or Crete in this respect. However we are sorry to note the fact that everybody seems to demonstrate an inclination toward the legal and medical sciences and those youth travelling abroad in order to get higher education would not for any reason turn toward any other field of study.⁶⁶⁰

The establishment saw in these graduates the men who would sooner or later aspire to be the new personnel of bourgeois politics. A law degree was in fact becoming the standard educational qualification in public life and administration. According to a survey, the occupations of 88% of those who served as Legislative Councillors from 1883 to 1931, were those of lawyer, merchant and landowner, practised alone or simultaneously.⁶⁶¹ What is more, Athens-educated lawyers were moving to the forefront of

659. Salpinx, "Eftikhima oti yparkhoun kai oi ptokhoi" (The existence of the poor is a blessing), January 19, 1891.

660. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Mia paratirisis" (An observation), November 11, 1892.

661. Marios Lysiotis, "The Legislative Council", The Cyprus Review, Vol. 2, No. 2, Nicosia, 1990, pp. 62-63.

the anti-government nationalist movement. At the turn of the century their catalytic influence within Cypriot society was noted with anxiety by the High Commissioner, Haynes-Smith:

The village communities are composed of a fine peasantry who are at present contented and industrious. The town communities, however, contain many political agitators, including several Greek advocates, who have little business and who have much to gain from agitation.⁶⁶²

The tax-farmers and merchant landowners of the Ottoman period had been too few, and hardly conscious of themselves as a class, not to be assimilated into official society. The new bloc of bourgeois, who manifested themselves after the first decade of British rule, were more numerous and more formidable in education and sophistication. In terms of concrete politics, the new situation was summed up clearly and concisely in a Salpinx editorial on August 17, 1891:

Our towns are divided into two and three factions, not parties, which fight amongst themselves. Their purpose is not to see that the most correct and beneficial of ideas are being examined and ultimately prevail but to cancel and ruin every effort for the achievement of anything that is good. The fact is however, that for the present situation those to blame are not the people, the class that is which is occupied with the task of labour. This class took no part in public affairs, either in the past or at present, but left their administration to those belonging to the higher classes. The responsibility for the present situation is borne, in our opinion by those who, by virtue of their moral and material development, belong to classes a' and b'.

Those of the second class compete with those of the first and, doing their best to show themselves as their equal, challenge their worth and power and try to

662. CO 67/124, "Confidential", W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 4, 1900.

obstruct their views and place obstacles to their wishes and commands, without having the boldness or influence to put into effect their own wishes and commands. Those of class a', being used till now to command public affairs without any checks, are displeased by this current, which is opposed to them and stems from their inferiors, and they depart from the stage abandoning everything in a quandary.⁶⁶³

Elite figures felt little else than scorn toward these pettifogging upstarts, who were viewed as unequipped to order the affairs of Cypriot society. These were not the established landowners and merchant money-lenders, who had dominated social and political life in Cyprus, from the Tanzimat era into the British period. The newcomers came mostly from the lower bourgeoisie, who were not as reliable in upholding established property and values. An editorial in Phoni tis Kyprou, had nothing but scorn for low-born dissenters:

The unemployed demagogues, like Cleon*,⁶⁶⁴ wearing the mask of patriotism shriek against the powers that be, being indifferent whether through such means they bring about more harm than benefit to society...We must all accept the fact that those who lack private property and are out of work cannot but deceive the working people. Therefore society must not allow the interference in public affairs of unemployed and lazy individuals.⁶⁶⁵

What rendered these men unsuitable for leadership was not that they had no property, for they had some and were rather eager to have more. They did not however enjoy the substantial

663. Salpinx, "Ek tis asymphonias i katastrophē" (Disagreement is the cause of ruin), August 17, 1891.

664. * A notorious demagogue in ancient Athens

665. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Arghia mitir kakias" (Idleness is the source of evil), November 28/9, 1892.

economic position which members of the elite did and were not as distinguished in rank and descent. Salpinx viewed the drift of the populace away from the influence of ruling families and personalities as an abandonment of society. In an editorial aptly titled "We are in need of Kocabasıs", the paper noted that notables were not anymore being viewed by the people with respect but with fear, or hatred; this was proof of a reign of ignorance, servility and a deadly numbness of the spirit:

Having left the position we held until a while ago, we moved forward in order to occupy the other extreme, - from aristocracy to democracy - we reached the middle stage of anarchy, and then we stopped there.

What is unfortunate is the fact that the aristocrats, having themselves abandoned their views and convictions, have also shifted their position and moved along with us. The result is that now that we cast a glance behind us, in order to offer command to the aristocracy, they are not there...This means that we have to demand the setting-up of a kind of Kocabasıs, that is of people who wield power and enjoy respect and who will decide on every issue concerning the community, after joint deliberations and consultations.⁶⁶⁶

The new bourgeois on their part would have none of this pessimism. The leaders emerging from their ranks were quite confident of their ability to formulate opinions on all issues which were discussed in the Legislative Council and the press: on finance, health and education.⁶⁶⁷ The major exponents of the new tendency were naturally based in the coastal towns of Larnaca and Limassol, and were men not disinclined to invest in manufacturing

666. Salpinx, "Ekhome anangin Kocabasidon", July 20, 1891.

667. For the divergence of opinion amongst Greek members of the Legislative Council see Zannetos, Historia, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 816.

establishments. Such were Joannis Kyriakides, owner of the first iron foundry in Limassol and Philios Zannetos, a Greek doctor from Messenia, who had settled in Larnaca and also ran a tobacco factory in the town. Both were leading nationalists and members of the Legislative Council. The spiritual head of the nationalists was the Bishop of Kitium, Kyrillos Papadopoulos. Having in the past been Bishop of Kyrenia, he had since his election to his new see, in 1893, been espousing the views prevalent in Larnaca and Limassol.

II. The Mounting Sentiment of Nationalism

The mere change in the position of the Greek popular classes, from subject race in an Ottoman province to majority community in a British colony, emboldened them in asserting their ethnic identity as part of their new-found civil and political status. In February 1879, the Greek Consul contrasted the situation with a gloomy report he had sent to Athens toward the close of the Ottoman period, in July 1876, and went on to add:

The spirit of the Cypriots has risen to an unbelievable degree. Four years ago the inhabitants of the island, particularly in the hinterland, refrained from calling themselves Greek, fearing the wrath of their Asian despots. Today, however, they boldly declare themselves Greek and refer to Greece as their dearest motherland.⁶⁶⁸

668. IAYE: 1879, File 99/2, N. Vassiliades, Consul of Greece, to Theodoros Delyiannis, Foreign Minister, February 18, 1879.

The ruling elite were careful to contain these sentiments within the framework of the traditional cooperation with the ruling power in the land, as well as the friendship between Greece and Britain. It followed that much of the growing sensitivity to the nation, which undoubtedly existed, was spontaneously generated from below. In June 1884, intense excitement was caused in Limassol by the arrival of the Greek navy corvette "Navarkhos Miaoulis", which had been expected for some time. People anxious to catch a glimpse of the ship, had crowded the roofs of houses and every available space looking on to the sea. The Cyprus Herald noted, with a degree of irony, that "this excitement was intensified owing to a rumour which spread among the lower orders, to the effect that His Majesty the King of the Hellenes was on board".⁶⁶⁹ Such expressions of national sentiment by the lower strata were of little political consequence in the absence of leadership and direction. To most of the lay and clerical elite, the circle of Nicosia in particular, with their tradition of cooperation with the ruling regime, nationalism was something best left alone. For the middle and lower middle classes of Limassol and Larnaca however, sensitivity and receptivity to Greek ideals was more than an act of conformity with the wider aspirations of Hellenism. Investing in patriotic appeals came to be a form of sectional politics. Nationalism seemed in fact to be supported by those social groups which were intent on advancing

669. The Cyprus Herald, "Arrival of a Greek Man of War at Limassol", June 7, 1884.

and legitimizing their own social and political status. This contrast was exemplified during the first island-wide manifestation of nationalism, when the Greek Cypriots were, in early 1886, asked to subscribe to the Patriotic Loan raised by the Government of Greece. Phoni tis Kyprou, which was at the time still being edited in Larnaca, acknowledged the enthusiasm with which the Patriotic Loan had been greeted in Limassol and, two weeks later, contrasted it with Nicosia where subscriptions to date had not been worthy of mention. Even the wealthy church of Phaneromeni had not as yet purchased any bonds, owing to dissension within the governing committee on the subject.⁶⁷⁰

To many nouveau riche and bourgeois in Larnaca and Limassol, patriotic activism was an opportunity to promote their parity with, and in some cases their superiority to, the Nicosia-based establishment. An editorial in Enosis, pointed out that several wealthy persons in Nicosia "though neglecting their divine obligation to the motherland still demanded that they be the leaders of the land".⁶⁷¹ Patriotic initiatives were ideal vehicles for sectional self-assertion. On August 28, 1886, the High Commissioner wrote to the Secretary of State that, although the number and names of the subscribers were not known, £1,600 worth of bonds were taken upon in the Limassol District alone,

670. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Diaphora" (Miscellaneous), February 1/13, 1886.

671. Enosis, "Enghoria" (Internal affairs), January 11/23, 1886.

"of which over one half were taken in the town of Limassol, and that nearly all the better class of people at Limassol were subscribers..."⁶⁷² Once such initiatives were launched plebeian strata were not lagging behind. Larnaca's Enosis noted the purchase by the town's carters of 50 shares, "which these labouring people have contributed...to the motherland out of their meagre savings".⁶⁷³ Shares sold equally well in the market, despite the stringent financial situation. Special praise was reserved for the mite of the poor, whose purses were exhausted by the purchase of a single bond.⁶⁷⁴

The politics of nationalism acquired momentum when they were attached to the social issues which concerned the daily lives of Greek Cypriots, and which became more intractable, after the unprecedented economic crisis of 1887. Rural discontent was initially manifest in a flow of petitions to the authorities. This was a time-honoured practice of the rural poor during times of distress, dating from the Ottoman era. These petitions, which were written in formal Greek, usually by school teachers or professional petition writers, requested as a rule that taxes be waived and assistance be given.⁶⁷⁵ The petitions raised no

672. CO 67/42, "Confidential", Sir Henry Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Stanhope, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 28, 1886.

673. Enosis, "Enghoria" (Internal affairs), January 4/16, 1886.

674. Ibid., January 11/23, 1886.

675. See the petition from the villages of Carpas peninsula in SA1:766/1887, the Muhtars and inhabitants of Leonarisso, Koma

political demands and were written with great humility, apparently reflecting the signatories' traditional awe toward higher authority.⁶⁷⁶

Yet, the contents of these petitions cannot reliably reflect the peasantry's views of the situation; those having to ask for assistance from the authorities, were not likely to reveal their true minds. What was in fact novel during the crisis was the open manifestation of anti-government sentiment. The Greek elite, even the section which was most reluctant to alienate the British, could not but take into account these tendencies amongst the peasantry and the labouring strata. By the end of 1887, with talk of a deputation to London in the air, a series of public meetings protesting at the Government's economic policy were being organised in the major towns of the island. The order in which these meetings were held was indicative of the strength of nationalist sentiment prevailing in each district. On December 17, 1887, Limassol was the first town to hold such a meeting and was followed on the 21st, by Larnaca and on the 27th, by Paphos. The meeting in Nicosia was, as the High Commissioner reported, "not held till the 8th of January and on the 18th of the same

tou Yialou, Tavrou, Ephtakomi, Komi Kebir, Vasili, Vathylakas, Rizokarpaso, Aiyialousa, Melanarga, Ayios Andronicos, Lithrangomi and Vocolida to the High Commissioner, March 7, 1887.

676. See for instance the petition in SA1:1075/1887, Inhabitants of Paramitha to the High Commissioner, April 12, 1887.

month it was followed by one in Famagusta".⁶⁷⁷ The political undercurrents of these meetings were also described in the report:

The bad harvest, the poverty which follows a bad harvest, the greater weight with which taxes are felt at such times, - all lent themselves to favour a scheme of holding public meetings which must be construed as a popular demonstration and an evidence of popular discontent with the existing state of things.⁶⁷⁸

The meetings were organised by the traditional leaders of the Greek community. Unlike the petitions emanating from rural communities, the resolutions of these meetings raised political issues. Wider powers were requested for the elected members of the Legislative Council and the meetings also resolved that a memorandum should be drawn up for the whole island, and that a deputation should proceed and submit it to the Colonial Office in London.⁶⁷⁹ The impact of these rallies was to strengthen popular resolve in resisting the authorities and their most despised representatives, the collectors of taxes. This in turn influenced the attitude of the commissions of rural communities and of Cypriot members in the Meclis Idare. Being elected officials,

677. CO 67/52, Sir H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 15, 1888.

678. Ibid.

679. For the content of the resolutions as well as the membership of the organising committees see [C.-5523], Correspondence Relating to Affairs and Finances of Cyprus, 1888: (I) Colonel Simpson Hackett, Officer Administering the Government, to Sir H. T. Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, January 10, 1888. Enclosures 1 (Limassol), 2 (Larnaca), 3 (Nicosia - Kyrenia), pp. 88-90; (II) Hackett to Holland, January 21, 1888. Enclosure (Paphos), pp. 90-91; (III) H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Holland, February 23, 1888. Enclosure (Famagusta), pp. 97-98.

these Cypriots were becoming reluctant to act as mere conveyor belts in the Government's policy of tax-collection. On January 1, 1888, the Müdir of the Nahieh (sub-district) of Evdhimou, in Limassol, accompanied by a tax-collector visited the village of Pissouri for the purpose of collecting taxes. They were met instead by a meeting of all the inhabitants, who had gathered to state why they were not in a position to pay their taxes. The two officials found it impossible to execute any warrants, because the Muhtar and his commission would not cooperate with them.⁶⁸⁰ Two weeks later the Commissioner of Limassol informed the Chief Secretary that tax-collectors were experiencing great difficulty in their work all over the district, owing to the feeling that was about, in consequence of recent meetings that had been held there and elsewhere.⁶⁸¹

By mid-summer 1888, similar reports were coming from all over the island. The Meclis Idare were in several cases delaying, and even refusing, to issue warrants for confiscation of the property of peasants who could not pay their taxes. On June 26, 1888, the Commissioner of Nicosia, Merton King, reported that the chief cause in the fall of revenue was that certain influences had for some time been at work in the villages, with the object of creating a spirit of resistance to government demands. The Meclis

680. SA1:129/1888, Note by R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, January 2, 1888.

681. Ibid., R. Michell to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, January 14, 1888.

Idare's attitude had made it impossible for the central authority to enforce payment of the revenues. So long as the people were supported by their representatives, they would resist paying taxes:

In many cases now, I believe, they do not even plead poverty, or ask for delay, but strong in the knowledge that the revenue officer is powerless, simply refuse to pay. This is a new element to contend with in revenue collecting...⁶⁸²

The report caused concern at the Colonial Office. The Secretary of State raised the question of the extent to which such phenomena had manifested themselves in other districts of the island. The High Commissioner in turn requested and received reports from the District Commissioners, sent summaries to London and also gave his own assessment of the state of the opposition in the countryside. It was caused by "persons of an agitating turn of mind", who had organised the public meetings in the winter of 1887-1888:

Meanwhile the state of things was generally straitened throughout the island, money was scarce, a very great number of people were ill-able to pay the Government or their other creditors, they were led away by the hopes raised at these public meetings that taxation would be soon or at once reduced, and I have no doubt that many were led away by village politicians into a belief that there was no great need for them to pay taxes...⁶⁸³

682. CO 67/54, Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, August 18, 1888. Enclosed in Sir H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 18, 1888.

683. CO 67/61, "Confidential", Bulwer to Knutsford, July 15, 1889.

III. The Deputation to London

This was no spontaneous resistance by people stepping on the wrong side of the law. An anti-government movement, leadership and following, was visibly in the making. It was precisely this increasingly political aspect of the agitation which blocked consensus between the two communities. The Turks, some of whom had originally considered the idea of joining the deputation to London, decided to abstain. They did not approve of the Greek demand for the abolition of the Tribute, which was viewed as one of the last remaining bonds between the island and the Porte. Disagreements on the issue of the deputation however were not limited along the ethnic divide, but also cut across the leadership of the Greeks, who were far from being unanimous. The nationalists, whose views reflected the mood of the public, favoured the mission; the conservatives however, based in Nicosia and Kyrenia and led by the Archbishop, were against it, realising that it would be followed by further activities of political protest, which would eventually render untenable their position and leadership. The issue was decided in a meeting of delegates from all over the island, convened in the Archbishopric on May 16, 1889. The High Commissioner reported that the despatch of a deputation had been resolved "by a majority of those present, though not without a strong opposition by the more moderately inclined persons".⁶⁸⁴

684. CO 67/52, Bulwer to Knutsford, May 18, 1889.

For the first time, in connection with so important an issue, the views of the old conservatives had failed to prevail; their continued opposition however still meant that the mission would not materialise for another year, during which the delay became the subject of public scorn.⁶⁸⁵ In the meantime, the conservatives succeeded in containing the impact of the deputation, by staffing it with their own people and by suitably formulating the demands that would be put to the British Government. In a confidential memorandum, on May 23, 1889, the High Commissioner referred to Archbishop Sophronios, who was to lead the mission, as "being pushed into it by ambitious and dissatisfied persons and being afraid to go against any movement of a popular nature..." According to Bulwer the second member of the deputation, the Archbishop's secretary Theodoros Peristianis, was being held in great respect by the higher classes in Cyprus. It was this feeling in his favour that had led to his nomination as a member of the deputation, "the moderate party last year though opposed to the deputation, insisting on his nomination when it found that a deputation would go". Bulwer wrote of Paschalis Constantinides, who was also to take part: "Although he did not, I believe, originate the movement he has, since it began, taken a

685. For instance, on September 24, 1888, Phoni tis Kyprou likened the deputation's inactivity to the sleep of the mythical Epimenides.

leading part in it". The fourth member of the deputation, Achilles Liassides, was described as being in line with the views of P. Constantinides.⁶⁸⁶

The issue of the deputation gave expression to a deep division in the ranks of the Greek leadership, which was indicative of two different political philosophies of conduct toward the alien power ruling the island. The conservative establishment based in Nicosia, and the Archbishop himself, tried, until the end, to find a way out of the situation in which they had been forced by popular discontent. On May 17, the Larnaca branch of the committee which had undertaken the organisation of the mission, sent a telegram to the members of the deputation, who assembled in Larnaca, but were apparently still not ready to embark. The telegram condemned, in strong terms, what were described as anti-patriotic initiatives of a circle of conservatives, based in Kyrenia and headed by Gregorios Demetriades, who had been undermining the despatch of the deputation.⁶⁸⁷ The

686. CO 67/60, "Confidential Memorandum". Enclosed in H. Bulwer, High Commissioner, to Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 23, 1889.

687. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File XVI [KET'], Item 66, N. L. Georghiades and others to Archbishop Sophronios, May 5/17, 1889.

G. Demetriades was a typical representative of the old guard of the Greek ruling class, ever-unwilling to oppose the alien power on the island. According to Coudounaris, he was one of the largest merchant landowners in the district, a judge during both the Ottoman and British administration, director of the Imperial Ottoman Bank's branch in Kyrenia, secretary of the church committee and, during 1887-1888, President of Kyrenia's Municipal Commission (Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., p. 46).

reservations which the deputation entertained to the last minute were finally overcome by another telegram, sent to the Archbishop by Limassol's nationalist caucus:

We firmly condemn as irrational and anti-patriotic every opposition to the decision which has been taken by the people, for despatching the deputation. General opinion here is that Your Beatitude and the rest of the members waste no time and embark tomorrow.⁶⁸⁸

The deputation to London eventually materialised and a memorandum was addressed to the Queen of England. Written in Greek it was couched in mild terms and requested that the level of taxation be lowered, the Tribute be cut by half and assistance be granted to the agricultural sector of the economy. With regard to political issues, the memorandum requested greater powers for the Legislative Council, the participation of Cypriots in the Executive Council and the regulation of the position of the Church. The national aspirations of the Greek Cypriots were, even if implicitly, alluded to. The relevant paragraph read as follows:

The Christian people of the island, though not forgetting their origins and traditions, and constantly aspiring to a national future, has never ceased and will never cease to view with optimism the political change, as a result of which, their fortunes were entrusted to the greatest and most civilised of nations.⁶⁸⁹

688. AAK, Sophronios Papers, File XVI [KET'], Item 67, Frangoudes and others to Archbishop Sophronios, May 17, 1889.

689. For the French original see [C.-5812], op. cit., "The Cyprus Deputation - Colonial Office", June 20, 1889, pp. 113-115).

The deputation did not influence the stand of the British Government toward Cyprus, though it did have an impact in the internal affairs of the island. The agitation toward the preparation of the mission had in itself contributed to the moulding of an already aroused public opinion. A growing anti-colonial sentiment, enveloping the lower strata, was viewed with increasing alarm by the conservatives and those associated with the Government. A demonstration of this sentiment was given during August 1888, when the press reported that Cypriots, working under the direction of the authorities, were trying to obtain signatures against the mission of the deputation, then still in London. In several instances, a suspicious peasantry simply refused to involve themselves in any paper work with the authorities. Alithia reported that in Asgata, a village in the district of Limassol, the population prevented the Muhtar from signing with his official seal a blank paper presented to him by the police.⁶⁹⁰ Such a sentiment was exhibited even in cases where the peasantry's interests might be affected. In four villages of Limassol district - Kalohorio, Ayios Pavlos, Asgata and Alethriko - the population refused to sign papers requesting a police patrol in their area, saying that they would take care of their thieves themselves.⁶⁹¹

690. Alithia, August 5/17, 1889.

691. SA1:2503/1889, E. J. Chetwind, Local Commandant of Police, Limassol, to Chief Commandant of Police, August 23, 1889.

Even more striking was the reaction of the lower strata in the towns, particularly in the bazaar of Nicosia, where the build-up of tension was eventually to burst. On August 23, the Receiver General informed the Chief Secretary that the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Heidenstam, had reported an attack on Christos Georgiades, a government employee who had been collecting information of births and deaths. The employee "had been mobbed and forced to take refuge from the violence of a mob in a house in the bazaar, the mob calling him a traitor and the betrayer of his country, beating doors with sticks and throwing stones". Heidenstam reported that two other employees in his department had also been hooted in the bazaar and called traitors.⁶⁹² Georgiades stated in Court that there were about 200 people present.⁶⁹³ This was a large number, which must have included people from all trades, thereby indicating the degree in which sectarian attitudes of distinct crafts had been eroded. The agitation must also have included all ranks, from master to apprentice. So much is drawn on the age groups of the agitators, according to Georgiades' protest to the Chief Justice: "Both old and young in the bazaar and in the streets follow me about calling out as I go: 'There is the traitor to his country', insulting me and threatening to kill me".⁶⁹⁴ There was in fact not much of

692. SA1:1296/1889, "Memorandum" by James Swettenham, Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, August 23, 1889.

693. SA1:2503/1889, "Magisterial Court in Nicosia before the Acting President", Statement of C. Georgiades, August 31, 1889.

694. SA1:2597/1889, Georgiades to Chief Justice, August 18, 1889.

a distinction in the popular mind between the colonial government and those Cypriots serving it against their own folk. Heidenstam wrote to the Chief Secretary:

The demonstrations increased to such a degree that the persons employed on the registration could not leave their houses without being assailed by an irritated mob and, although no attack was made against me personally, I was informed that all sorts of abuse was heaped upon me in the cafes.⁶⁹⁵

IV. Social Divisions and Freemasonry

The issue of the deputation highlighted the shifting balance in the internal politics of the Greek community. This was the first time that the Nicosia-Kyrenia elite had been dragged into a decision by the middle classes of Larnaca and Limassol. The latter had been able to do so, riding on top of a wave of anti-government sentiment. Though the members of the deputation had impeccable establishment credentials, and were headed by the Archbishop himself, it was only a matter of time before the nationalists, instead of enforcing their views upon the establishment would try and replace them in the leadership of the Greek community. A sharpening of the ideological conflict was indicated by the erosion of localism and the manifestation of differences within the ruling circles of each town. In Larnaca, an aristocratic wing, hesitant at too much association with the anti-government sentiments of the lower orders, was increasingly

695. SA1:3063/1889, F. Heidenstam, Chief Medical Officer, to F. Warren, Chief Secretary, October 3, 1889.

associated with the moderate newspaper Enosis. Radical opinion in the town's politics was expressed by the launching, in 1891, of Ethnos. Two years later a third and even more nationalist newspaper, Neon Ethnos, came out in Larnaca. A corresponding dichotomy was deepening in Limassol between the more moderate Salpinx and the traditionally nationalist Alithia. What was more decisive however was the crystallization of a nationalist caucus in conservative Nicosia, heralded by the publication, in 1890, of Evagoras, as a counterweight to the establishment mouthpiece of Phoni tis Kyprou. Politics were becoming less factional and more ideological, and the ideology which was continuously on the rise was nationalism.

By the turn of the first decade of colonial rule the nationalists were developing a lasting political network, which overcame local and regional linkages; this was based on the cult of freemasonry. Having been ostracised by the Church in 1815, the cult reappeared 73 years later. Saint Paul's Lodge was founded by British servicemen in Limassol in April 1888, under the aegis of the Great Lodge of England. The following year, the lodge was joined by a number of Limassol's prominent Greeks, two of whom were elected to the posts of secretary and master of ceremonies. The leading Greek freemason was a physician, Joannes Karageorgiades, who had been introduced to the cult as far back as 1865, during his studies in Athens.⁶⁹⁶ By 1893, the number of Greeks in

696. Christophoros G. Tornaritis, Historia tou syngekrotimenou Kypriakou tektonismou (The history of organised Cypriot freemasonry), Limassol, 1948, p. 5.

Saint Paul's Lodge was large enough to enable them to form a lodge of their own. In November of that year, J. Karageorgiades became president of Zeno Lodge, which was placed under the aegis of the Megali Anatoli, the supreme masonic establishment in Greece.⁶⁹⁷

The establishment of Greek freemasonry in Cyprus did not sour relations between the British and Greek Great Lodges; the colonial authorities for their part seemed for a while indifferent toward this masonic enosis. In the immediate future the Greek freemasons were to prove a far greater menace to the status quo within their own community. Most of them came from the professions and were usually lawyers and, to a lesser degree, medical doctors and teachers. The landed gentry were hardly represented in their ranks. Freemasonry provided the tissue which wielded together the new bourgeoisie that was taking shape after the early years of British rule and their network of lodges was the only island-wide organisation of this class. Their ascendancy within the Greek community was, to a large degree, the outcome of their literary prowess, making them worthy representatives of the new and literate bourgeoisie. The founder of Zeno Lodge in Limassol, J. Karageorghides, apart from being a doctor of medicine was also a polyglot, wrote theatrical works and translated

697. Christou A. Rizopoulou, Oi titloi ton Hellenikon tektonikon stoon tis Kyprou (The titles of Greek masonic lodges in Cyprus), Nicosia, 1980, pp. 29-32.

Paradise Lost in Greek.⁶⁹⁸ Philios Zannetos, the aforementioned prominent nationalist in Larnaca, was also a doctor, author of theatrical works and his three volume history of Cyprus.⁶⁹⁹ G. S. Frangoudes, from Limassol, founded the Pandeios School in Athens, a higher education institution for the study of social science and politics.⁷⁰⁰ Nicolaos Katalanos, the most effective nationalist in the island, was also a very eloquent writer. Apart from his editorship of Evagoras, from 1896 onwards, he also wrote a number of books of historical interest and edited Zeno, a political and literary review.⁷⁰¹ Within the environment of a poor colony, emerging out of three centuries of Ottoman rule, these were enlightenment figures. However, the freemasons made their greatest impact in Cypriot society through their political orientation toward Greece. Their ranks kept throwing up radical nationalist leaders; all freemasons were ardent nationalists and most leading nationalists were freemasons.

698. Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

699. Ibid., p. 57.

700. Ibid., pp. 242-243.

701. Ibid., p. 89.

CHAPTER 10

THE FORMATION OF A POPULAR MOVEMENT

I. The Class Bias of Taxation

Following the British reform of the island's finances, though taxes were considerably rationalised and rendered directly payable to the state, the apportioning of taxation was far from equitable. Tax assessments of individual inhabitants still favoured the richer and more influential members of the community; efficiency in collection only made them heavier. Of the major taxes, the vergi kimat, a tax of 4 per 1,000 on the registered value of houses and immovable property, was particularly onerous on the poor. Explaining the failure of tax-collectors to collect the vergi kimat in the town of Larnaca, the District Commissioner wrote to the Receiver General, in September 1889:

I cannot too often, or too, strongly point out the hideous injustice inflicted on many persons in the town and especially in Old Larnaca, by the assessment of 1882. I have furnished many examples and I should be glad some day to be allowed to point out in the quarters of Sotiros and St. John the huts and ruins inhabited by the poor and the value let against them involving taxes which it is impossible that the holders can pay.⁷⁰²

The crisis had only highlighted the problem, which was endemic in the mode of assessment of taxes. Attempts by the authorities to reform the system of land valuation and taxation,

702. SA1:3130/1889, Cited in J. Sweetenham, Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, October 9, 1889.

were met with widespread opposition, both in the Legislative Council and the press. In 1898, 20 years into British rule, the High Commissioner, Haynes-Smith, wrote to the Secretary of State:

The Elective Members represent the owners of property, and under the slavery of words this is deemed a liberal constitution, whereas in effect it prevents the Government of the country making property bear its fair share of the taxation...Year after year, for a long series of years, a Valuation Bill has been brought before the Council and year after year the Council have refused to pass any measure which the Government can accept. The whole difficulty lies in the fact that the large properties are under-assessed and the smallholdings are over-assessed...⁷⁰³

The British, having shown their determination in reforming other fields of finance and administration, would not go to the length of imposing legislation from London for the sake of greater equitability in taxation. They seemed in fact prepared to tolerate shortcomings in this field, even serious ones, so long as revenue was forthcoming and directed to the Tribute obligations. This goal governed their approach on the two taxes which affected labourers and tradesmen, that is the askerî and temettü respectively. The Colonial Office objected in principle to the incidence of poll-taxation, which was imposed irrespective of ability to pay. The Secretary of State preferred the imposition of an income tax for the wealthier classes and the working out, by the High Commissioner, of a plan which "would relieve the working class from the present undue pressure of personal taxa-

703. CO 67/113, "Confidential", W. F. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, October 29, 1898.

tion upon them without too great a sacrifice of revenue". R. Biddulph, who was himself in broad agreement with the Secretary of State, was asked to elicit discussion in the matter and a means "of ascertaining the feelings of some of the more intelligent members and classes of the community".⁷⁰⁴

In the event, the rich would not suggest taking upon themselves the tax burdens of the poor. The High Commissioner replied that a regular income tax would meet with very great opposition from the richer classes and added: "We should thus have arrayed against us the Greek clergy, the landed proprietors, the foreign merchants, and the officials, whilst on the other hand the relief to the poor would not be great".⁷⁰⁵ The tax was kept in force because of these cool considerations, which were meaningful only so long as the poor had no voice in public affairs. Two years later the tax was again criticised by Edward Fairfield, in his memorandum on the finances of Cyprus: though not heavy, it was open to all the ordinary objections to a poll-tax and a few additional ones, was very troublesome to collect and was evaded altogether by many of the better class Christians.⁷⁰⁶ The Government however

704. [C.-2930], Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Cyprus, Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Sir R. Biddulph, High Commissioner, April 28, 1881, (London, 1881), p. 114.

705. Ibid., Biddulph to Kimberley, May 14, 1881, pp. 132-133.

706. [C.-3661], Fairfield "Memorandum", op. cit., p. 60.

would proceed no further than modify the old system of keeping tallies and collect revenue by a new body of literate tax-collectors.⁷⁰⁷

Thereafter, until the beginning of the 20th century, the askerî remained in force, weighing most heavily on the poor and uniting labourers and craftsmen of village and town in a common grievance. It was only in 1903 that the High Commissioner, faced with a broadly based national movement, had to seek sanction to abolish the temettü and askerî taxes. In spite of the elapse of 20 years, objections continued to give rise to friction and alienate the labouring population in numbers quite disproportionate to the revenue raised out of them. The High Commissioner, W. Haynes-Smith, added with reference to the askerî:

In the year ending the 31st March 1902 there were 4,166 prosecutions to recover the half crown - 73 persons were imprisoned for not paying it. There are constant applications for exemptions on the ground of sickness and each case is a new centre of discontent and ill-will toward the Government.⁷⁰⁸

II. Rural Agitation

The authorities' lack of resolve to deal with usurious practices enabled money-lenders to demonstrate a rapacity exceeding that of their tax-farming predecessors. No voices of consequence

707. Ibid., Sir R. Biddulph, High Commissioner, to Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 30, 1882, p. 103.

708. CO 67/134, Sir W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 15, 1903.

were raised in the peasantry's defence. Apart from the members of the Legislative Council, the conservative press also stood for the interests of the money-lenders. Two Salpinx editorials, in January 1894, complained of the difficulties met by Limassol money-lenders in sequestrating the properties of insolvent peasants, even though writs had been issued by the courts. This failure was blamed on the inadequate numbers of policemen allocated toward this purpose and suggested instead the formation of a special corps of sequestrators, under the direction of the Commissioners. The keenness of this corps would be ensured by the fact that they would not be salaried but would receive instead a percentage on the value of the property seized.⁷⁰⁹

Responding to these demands, the Government authorised the employment of civilian bailiffs to assist the zaptiyes allotted to the district. "It was necessary to take immediate steps to remedy this state of affairs", wrote the High Commissioner to the Secretary of State, adding his hope that "the arrears would in a short time be considerably diminished".⁷¹⁰ The eagerness of the authorities to heed to the demands of the establishment and the sanctity of the law of contract, worsened the already vicious

709. See the articles in Salpinx:

a) "I vradytis ekteleseos diatagmaton kataskheseos" (Delay in execution of sequestration warrants), January 20, 1894;

b) "Dynatai na eklipsi i vradytis is tin ektelesin diatagmaton kataskheseos" (It is possible to do away with delay in execution of sequestration warrants), January 27, 1894.

710. CO 67/86, Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, August 13, 1894.

circle of taxation, money-lending and expropriation. During the second decade of British rule, 1889-1898, production of wheat averaged an annual 201,000 kiles as compared to a figure of 129,000 for the first decade, 1879-1888.⁷¹¹ Yet, though during the decade output had risen by 56%, the value of property auctioned at forced sales rose faster, reaching in 1898 an unprecedented £72,569,⁷¹² which represented a 373% increase over the corresponding figure of £15,337 for the year 1887.

Popular mobilisation, with definite political objectives, which began to be manifested during the late 1880s, was to continue during the following decade and was moreover to spill over into the countryside. This was more obvious in the wine-growing hinterland of Limassol, where the predominantly Greek population were perennially distressed and discontented. At the end of the 1897 grape harvest, the High Commissioner noted on the mode of taxation, which had not been reformed since Ottoman times:

At the close of the wine-making season, a number of Excise Officers, all Moslems and each protected by an armed Police Officer, visit the wine-growing villages and calculate the quantity of wine manufactured by the peasants.⁷¹³

711. These averages have been worked out from SA1:1657/1902, "Statement showing since the occupation the general production, the exports and quantity of cereals remaining in the island" June 7, 1902.

712. [C.-9288], Cyprus - Annual Reports for 1897-8, Report of the Registrar General, G. Smith, August 20, 1898, (London, 1899), p. 70.

713. CO 67/108, Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 26, 1897.

The intense ill-feeling amongst the peasantry did not result in organised protest. Deviance and banditry were the peasantry's spontaneous response to their situation. It was however the intervention of the new and nationalist middle class of Limassol town which channelled the district's rural discontent into the broad anti-government and eventually anti-colonial movement. On September 9, 1894, 5,000 peasants took part in a wine rally at Pera Pedi; this was, according to the High Commissioner, the largest number that had ever been assembled for a common object since the British occupation.⁷¹⁴ This mobilisation had political overtones, against both the Government and the Cypriot moneyed establishment. The resolution which was read aloud and approved at the rally, described each wine-grower as bearing a very heavy debt against private creditors, as well as the Government. Special criticism was reserved for the Meclis Idare, which were described as unrepresentative and under the control of District Commissioners.⁷¹⁵

As in the case of the deputation, four years earlier, some of the leaders who took part in the rally did so reluctantly and took care not to alienate themselves from the Government. Phoni

714. CO 67/87, Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, to the Marquis of Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, September 24, 1894.

715. Ibid., Enclosure I, "Memorandum of wine-growers", bearing the signature of Socratis Frangoudes and the seals of 113 villages, September 9, 1894.

tis Kyprou, reported that 47 Muhtars did not seal the resolution to the High Commissioner, stating that they had forgotten to bring their seals with them.⁷¹⁶ The tune however was set by the energetic townsmen, who promoted the rally. The High Commissioner added in his despatch: "Such a meeting, gathered as it was from all parts of the wine districts, could not have been brought together without considerable preparation". The principal promoter was Joannis Kyriakides, lawyer and member of the Legislative Council, and the president of the rally was Socratis Frangoudes, who had no connection with the wine trade.⁷¹⁷ The bourgeois inspiration of this rural mobilisation was stressed more emphatically by the Receiver General, William Taylor:

There is no doubt that to call the memorial spontaneous, is misdescription, as both meeting and memorial were the outcome of an agitation of some weeks carried in the wine villages by persons mostly unconnected with the wine industry or remotely connected with it; all the arrangements for the meeting were planned and conducted by them and the meeting was presided over by a gentleman unconnected with the wine industry...⁷¹⁸

The experience of this agitation stirred up amongst the district's rural population an attitude of defiance, which lasted throughout the rest of the year. In January 1894, at Ayios Therapos, the people refused, for a while, to allow assessors to inspect their wines. In Lophou, Lania and other villages they

716. Phoni tis Kyprou, "To syllalitirion ton oinoparagogon" (The wine-growers' rally), September 3/15, 1894.

717. CO 67/87, Sendall to Ripon, op. cit.

718. Ibid., Enclosure I, Note by W. Taylor, September 20, 1894.

threatened that if the Government did not accept their excise duties in kind, they would not allow any assessment of their wines at all. When warned that they were subject to fines and imprisonment, they replied that if all inhabitants sent the assessors away, the Government would be powerless to touch them.⁷¹⁹

Despite the fact that rural discontent was island-wide, the first stirrings of a peasant movement remained delimited to the region of Limassol. In other regions, outlying ones in particular, the structure of power appeared too firm for any activity to be advisable.

III. Wage-Earners, Tradesmen and Popular Grievances

The 1890s, up to the eve of the World War, were years when agitation was led by the plebeian strata, petty traders and tradesmen, rather than wage-earners. Wages and conditions of employment were not yet made issues in towns, given that wage-earners were not as yet conscious of their rights in labour relations. They were more prepared to react against the price of necessities, unemployment and taxation, grievances that is over which they could make common cause with tradesmen, and which brought them in conflict with the state rather than any class as

719. SA1:2300/1894, William Mackay, Deputy Master of Customs House, Limassol, to R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, January 11, 1894.

such. In August 1895 Phoni tis Kyprou, reported of discontent rife in the bazaar. For lack of work, people would pass their time gathering in shops:

Those of the lower class - who have not been educated - keep talking on the poor state of the market and the rise in the price of foodstuffs, blaming the Government and bringing into their mind past times, when their families could live on three piastres a day.

- How cheap everything was at the time!
- And how busy we were!⁷²⁰

The level of wages was naturally viewed as significant, though labourers were still too timid to make an issue of them. If they did, they were looking not forward, to advance their level of income, but backward, to recover it. The only instance of a wage dispute during the period, was reported in Salpinx in July 1895. A spontaneous two-day long stoppage by labourers in public works, in Limassol, aimed not to increase but to avert a decrease in their wages:

Why should we not have our strikes? During the previous Saturday and Monday those working on the river canal went on a general strike. And a proper and well-planned strike it was. The foremen rose up, got ready for the job, whistled, rang the bell, screamed, for the labourers to come by and begin work but they, like unfaltering columns stood in groups here and there, laughing, swearing and refusing to move. And why? Because a piastre had been cut from their daily wage. It was in fact funny, watching the foremen yell or try to give advice whereas labourers, around 500 of them, poured out ridicule, leaning on their pickaxes and spades. After a while, in small groups, they went on with their task, thank God.⁷²¹

720. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I Lefkosia ypo ton elion" (Nicosia under the sun), August 4, 1895.

721. Salpinx, "Aperghia" (A strike), July 1, 1895.

The fact that the role of the rudimentary proletariat was not decisive, did not in any way lower the temper of popular agitation. In the circumstances of the 1890s, amongst tradesmen, everything combined to maximise discontent against the authorities. Of all taxes affecting the non-agricultural population, those on the town tradesmen were, for the British administration, politically the most damaging. If there was one thing these tradesmen hated most that was taxation, imposed by governmental as well as municipal authorities. The former form of taxation, known as vergi temettü, amounted at the time of the occupation to a 3 per cent tax on incomes not derived from ownership of land, and as such it embraced merchants, tradesmen, journeymen and simple labourers, in town and country. On December 23, 1880, the High Commissioner directed all Commissioners to exempt from payment of vergi temettü all labourers, as well as those artisans who kept no shops and received daily hire for their labour.⁷²² The burden of temettü was however maintained on tradesmen who kept even rudimentary premises, and whose income was hardly higher than that of the journeymen they could not afford to hire. The tax was also imposed on tradesmen who had no premises but were nevertheless employers of labour, such as building contractors.

722. SA1:16941, Chief Secretary's Circular No. 20,018/1 to all Commissioners, December 23, 1880.

A first assessment, at village or parish level, was carried out by a locally elected commission, and was later ratified by another body appointed by the Meclis Idare, the Emlâk Commission. Arbitrariness was inherent in the system and was pointed out in a note on the temettü tax prepared by the Director of Survey, R. E. Kitchener, and sent to the Chief Secretary, F. Warren:

I feel that it will be quite impossible to obtain a fair assessment of this tax as long as it is left in the hands of Commissions of the most interested parties - uniformity does not exist even in a single town as the friends and relations of the Commission are of course let off lightly, and other towns such as Larnaca & Limassol are differently assessed; this of course causes complaints.⁷²³

Such complaints were louder in periods of distress and were voiced by tradesmen of town and country, both being liable to temettü. The carters of Athienou, a village at the junction of the roads connecting Nicosia, Larnaca and Famagusta, had depended for a living on a constant flow of merchandise. In February 1887, badly hit by the crisis, 41 of these tradesmen petitioned the Chief Secretary against the assessments made by government agents, at a time when many of them had been forced to abandon their trade and engage themselves in agriculture.⁷²⁴ Most tradesmen however could turn to no such alternatives. In towns, where tradesmen of all sorts were concentrated, the major effect of tax pressure was to unite them in their grievance, regardless of

723. SA1:13467, Kitchener to Warren, August 25, 1882.

724. SA1:366/1887, Ghiorghis Vassiliou and others to Chief Secretary (The petition, which was undated, was received at the Secretariat on February 8, 1887).

their traditional vertical distinction as members of different trades. On February 5, 1887, as the first strains of the crisis were being felt, 370 tradesmen from the town of Nicosia petitioned for a decrease in their temettü, which they described as insupportable and unbearable.⁷²⁵ The Government responded by the formation of commissions to hear appeals against assessments. These were made up by the District Commissioner, the Revenue Clerk and two members selected by the local Meclis Idare.⁷²⁶ However, benefits to distressed tradesmen were practically nullified by the fact that those appealing would have to produce their books to the commission. After a year's experience of the appeal process, the Assistant Chief Secretary, G. Smith, observed: "In Cyprus, where few tradesmen keep books, or keep them in such a manner that they cannot be comprehended, the matter is much more complicated".⁷²⁷

Such appeals, instead of solving problems tended to perpetuate them, in an endless wrangling between government and tradesmen. In the town of Kyrenia, in February 1888, the authorities were still trying to work out the dues owed for the period 1886-1887 by 64 tradesmen who had appealed against their assessments. That was a large number for the size of Kyrenia.

725. SA1:542/1887, A. Theoharides and others to Legislative Council, February 5/17, 1887.

726. SA1:334/1887, See the recommendations of W. Taylor, Acting Receiver General, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, June 8, 1887.

727. SA1:757/1888, Note by G. Smith, Assistant Chief Secretary and Clerk to the Legislative Council, May 15, 1888.

Despite the lack of employment figures for the island's towns, available statistics indicate that Cypriots between the ages of 25 to 70, when a man would have the potential of practising an independent trade, were approximately 40% of the male population. For a town in which, according to the last census, lived 631 males the corresponding figure in that age bracket would be 252. This would include all who paid no temettü - those attached to the Government, the Municipality, the Church and of course, the high number of wage-earners. Therefore the 64 payers of temettü who disputed their dues amounted in all probability to the majority of the town's plebeian population. And a plebs they were: six coffee-house and four inn keepers, six masons, five carpenters, two shoemakers and one joiner, two barbers and two cooks, two butchers and three grocers, five lightermen and four captains. There were also five unspecified traders, one merchant and one shopkeeper and the solitary miller, baker, farrier, muleteer and oil dealer. One ship owner, one advocate and the Ottoman and Anglo-Egyptian Banks were also listed, though these two establishments, in a town the size of Kyrenia, could only be represented by a broker each.⁷²⁸ The mass of petty tradesmen were being alienated by the temettü tax which, in 1903, was singled out by the High Commissioner for a particularly damning verdict:

(It) is resented by all classes affected and the result is merely some £3,140 a year. The amounts are assessed and disputed and then fought again in the Meclis Idare - The rich escape and the poor are

728. The list is enclosed in SA1:3106/1897, Minutes of the Meclis Idare of Kyrenia, Meeting of February 2, 1888.

mulcted...The abolition of the temettü would stop the constant fight at each step of the thousands of assessments for temettü, in which the Government is involved for the trifling results, before mentioned.⁷²⁹

IV. Towns as Centres of Social Conflict

Apart from temettü, which was imposed by the Government, tradesmen in towns also paid municipal taxes. Given that members of Municipal Commissions were government appointees such taxes were not regarded as different from those paid to the Government. In a petition of October 1881, 48 traders of Nicosia, after referring to the temettü with which they were already burdened, protested that they were also charged from three to 15 shillings as municipal temettü.⁷³⁰ The passing of time did not seem to alter this view. In August 1885, a petition from 40 tradesmen in Nicosia, of both communities, complained that, just as they were ready to ask the Government for exemption from temettü tax, the municipal collector asked for another temettü. The petitioners addressed the High Commissioner in strong terms: "It is against all laws and against the justice of the British Government as well as against the conscience of your Excellency that a person should pay two different temettü taxes".⁷³¹

729. CO 67/134, W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 15, 1903.

730. SA1:10217, Hadji Hussein and others to the High Commissioner, October 25, 1887.

731. SA1:3698/1885, Hadji Mehmed Rifaat and others to the High Commissioner, August 7, 1885.

Municipal taxation was haunted with the same problems regarding assessment of taxes to the Government. On August 12, 1885, the Commissioner of Kyrenia, Edward Kenyon, noted in a despatch to the Chief Secretary that Municipal Commissions fixed rates for the various classes of tradesmen, though the manner in which a tradesman was allocated to a class was often very arbitrary.⁷³² As in the case of temettü, municipal taxes had the effect of obliterating vertical lines of distinction and stressing horizontal ones, particularly because such taxes bore more heavily on the poorest of tradesmen. On September 15, 1888 the Owl, an English language newspaper, reported that the retail traders of Nicosia were preparing a petition to the High Commissioner against the level of municipal taxation. Several of them had to pay first-class licences whereas wholesale merchants, who turned over 10 or 20 times the amount of capital, without perhaps ever seeing the goods, only paid a nominal sum.⁷³³

Town tradesmen, who were subject to taxation by government as well as municipal authorities, were more heavily taxed than their rural counterparts. What is more, the politicized environment of the towns, made for more firm reaction on their part. The economic struggle was thus further embittered by the political struggle over municipal administration, in which the privileges of the oligarchies were contested by the general body of petty

732. SA1:3410/1885, E. Kenyon, Commissioner of Kyrenia, to Falk Warren, Chief Secretary, August 12, 1885.

733. The Owl, "Miscellaneous", September 15, 1888.

craftsmen, retailers and small shopkeepers. In August 1893, upon the declared intention of Nicosia's Municipal Commission to impose a new trade tax, the tradesmen's response overwhelmed the confines of craft consciousness. On August 25, 1893 the opposition newspaper, Evagoras, noted with approval:

A good start; our fellow inhabitants of Nicosia have made a move. Last Wednesday practically the entire population of traders, craftsmen, grocers and others, gathered in the coffee shop, at the centre of the bazaar, in order to confer on our Municipal affairs and in particular on the trade tax which has recently been imposed by the Municipal Commission.⁷³⁴

The same issue of Evagoras carried a full page editorial which was in agreement with the tradesmen's grievances and castigated the burden of taxation and the use of municipal revenue for the maintenance of an inefficient bureaucracy.⁷³⁵ Generally running with public opinion, tradesmen were now also helping to forge it. Though their influence was not as great as that of the merchant money-lenders or the wealthiest of shopkeepers, it was nevertheless not negligible and was echoed as such in the opposition press. An editorial in another issue of Evagoras argued that the Municipal Commission existed only in name and that, with regard to road maintenance and sanitation, there was no improvement to the situation which had prevailed under the Ottomans.⁷³⁶

734. Evagoras, "O dimotikos foros epitidevmatos" (The municipal trade tax), August 25, 1893.

735. Ibid., "O dimotikos foros epitidevmatos - Kathikonda kai dikaionomata" (The municipal trade tax - Obligations and rights).

736. Ibid., "I katastasis tis poleos", December 23, 1893.

Tradesmen likewise formulated an opposition political stance. On September 19, 1893, 119 tradesmen, two thirds of whom were Greeks, sent to the Government a strongly-worded memorandum, arguing that the Municipal Commission's only function was to feed the multitude of employees, who were subject to no audit or supervision. The signatories of the memorandum declared that none of them would pay the tax on his own accord and without an injunction from the court.⁷³⁷ Three months later another memorandum, by practically the same tradesmen who had signed the previous one, concentrated on issues which in Europe had, in the previous 100 years, been the bread and butter of political radicalism. These were eventually being raised by tradesmen in the capital of Cyprus. Nobody made provision to learn whether the amount paid for road repairs was the accurate one and nobody checked the amount of fees collected in the bazaar. The Government should in fact issue an order for the election of a Municipal Council from the mass of the community. Only such a body would be competent to impose taxation.⁷³⁸

Municipal authorities were thus, no less than the central government, coming into conflict with the majority of the towns' plebeian population. During the 1890s low and unstable demand meant a precarious existence for the lower classes and the multi-

737. SA1:2256/1893, G. Papadopoulos and others to the High Commissioner, September 19, 1893.

738. Ibid., G. Papadopoulos and others to the Chief Secretary, January 2/14, 1894.

tude arriving from the countryside. Most of these poor sought a living in the bazaar, apparently oblivious to the norms and customs of the previous generation. Some of them tried to engage in occupations presupposing a minimum of skill, or none at all. Others became itinerant traders, confined to marginal sectors and offering bread, cooked foods and muffins. Lacking even rudimentary premises they had to carry their commodities in trays, thereby earning the enmity of the established keepers of shops, who were hostile to competitors enjoying minimal operating costs. The corporate bazaar, where each tradesman abided by his station, was becoming a thing of the past. Whenever disputes arose, municipal authorities as a rule, sided with the men of substance. A petition of September 22, 1894, requesting an increase in the number of butcher shops in Nicosia, to cope with the demand of 150 butchers, was dismissed by the President of the Municipal Commission. The District Commissioner, who approved of this decision, informed the Chief Secretary that the number of shops was amply sufficient and added, with contempt for the petitioners:

The statement contained in the petition that the number of butchers exceeds 150 is a manifest exaggeration, unless indeed every hamal who carries a carcass from the Abattoir to the market be counted as a butcher. The actual number of persons carrying on the trade of butcher in the town does not, I think, exceed sixteen or seventeen; and by far the large majority of those who are responsible for the petition are simply slaughtermen or meat porters, who, after the market time has passed, buy a few scraps of refuse, or unsold meat from the regular butchers, or take it in lieu of wages, and then hawk them in the streets to be purchased by the poorer classes.⁷³⁹

739. SA1:1881/1894, Merton King, Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, December 3, 1894.

Hawkers of food were generally met with the most punishing aspects of the law. Alfred Bovill, President of the Municipal Commission, noted to the Chief Secretary: "The greater part of the people prosecuted are not butchers at all, they are only labourers and they have no money and invariably go to prison, not being able to pay a fine".⁷⁴⁰ The Greek establishment saw eye to eye with the authorities in their harassment against the mass of poor eking out a living in the streets of the towns. Phoni tis Kyprou, commented on the trial of hawkers of meat:

We thoroughly approve of the severity shown a few days ago by the local court against certain butchers who were reported by the Municipal Commission as hawking meat for sale in the market, in contradiction to municipal regulations. A fine of one pound or a ten-day imprisonment is admittedly fit punishment; however will this punishment bring them to reason so that they do not repeat the offence? Unfortunately we doubt it.⁷⁴¹

Phoni tis Kyprou, also demanded that the Municipal Commission take measures against sellers of ice-cream, who were unclean and a nuisance to public health.⁷⁴² The same charge was brought against a multitude of itinerants [πληθώρα πλανοδίων], selling sweets whose cleanliness was doubtful.⁷⁴³

740. Ibid., A. Bovill, President of Nicosia Municipal Commission, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, September 8, 1894.

741. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Oi planodioi kreopolai" (Itinerant sellers of meat), October 14/26, 1892.

742. Ibid., "Kalos tha praxei" (What the Commission should do), July 14/26, 1893.

743. Ibid., "Apo Lefkosias eis Lefkosian" (From Nicosia to Nicosia), September 17/29, 1894.

In some cases the colonial authority was more lenient than the local establishment toward the violation of bazaar regulations. In February 1894, the Municipal Commission of Nicosia, heeding demands by Nicosia's bakers, resolved to pass a by-law prohibiting the use of long trays carried by bread hawkers and to submit the law for the High Commissioner's approval. The Government however, having to consider a wider spectrum of social interests, was at first reluctant to abide by the shopkeepers' demand. Writing to the Chief Secretary the Queen's Advocate, Frederick Templer, noted that the sale of bread by trays in the bazaar had been a long-established custom, whose abolition would jeopardise the livelihood of a good many sellers of bread and would also cause inconvenience to the public.⁷⁴⁴ Phoni tis Kyprou however, commented on the issue with open hostility against those who could not afford premises:

The sickening custom of carrying bread for sale upon planks has at long last to be prohibited by the authorities, because it is the reason why we hear of people wounded in the head, and of other accidents to passers-by.⁷⁴⁵

The issue was finally decided by the intervention of the police, ever anxious of the multitude of disorderly menu peuple in the bazaar. The Local Commandant of Police pointed out the damage to shopkeepers' interests by the nuisance of bread hawkers

744. SA1:447/1894, F. Templer, Queen's Advocate, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, March 3, 1894.

745. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Prepi na apagorefthi" (It must be prohibited), March 19/31, 1894.

blocking the bazaar's narrow streets. Special orders had already been issued to policemen not to allow hawkers to loiter in certain localities though, as the Commandant noted, the remedy seemed little better than the disease, because it had the effect of shifting the nuisance from one spot to another.⁷⁴⁶ Legislation which would provide for prosecutions and sentences in the courts was eventually sanctioned in February 1895, upon a further appeal by the Municipal Commission.⁷⁴⁷

Disputes in the market place became more obviously a conflict between the menu peuple and the establishment when, on August 11, 1895, Achilleas Liassides, was appointed President of Nicosia's Municipal Commission. Coming only four months after Liassides had, along with Paschalis Constantinides, been appointed to the Executive Council of the colony, control of the municipality further enhanced their circle's powers of patronage. In the politicised climate of the late 1890s, the post would also become the focus of bitter criticism, particularly because during Liassides' tenure the Municipal Commission, even more than it had under a British President, sided with the moneyed establishment. This was first noticeable in the sensitive field of allocation of trade rates, where men of modest means never tired of complaining about the inequitable method of assessment. Upon the submission

746. SA1:447/1894, G. S. Cade, Local Commandant of Nicosia Police, to A. Young, Acting Chief Commandant of Police, March 27, 1894.

747. For the sentences provided for by the law see the Cyprus Gazette, February 1, 1895.

of the trades' list for approval to the District Commissioner of Nicosia, the Acting Commissioner, George Smith, singled out hawkers of kerosene and matches for comment: "The persons employed in this trade are of the very poorest class and I cannot help thinking that their trade will be ruined if they are called upon to pay the same rate as wholesale vendors".⁷⁴⁸ The Queen's Advocate, Alfred Lascelles, also noted that the Municipal Commission had imposed no rate on the profession of advocate, "the most lucrative one in Cyprus".⁷⁴⁹ Agreeing with Lascelles, the Chief Secretary instructed the Commissioner of Nicosia to inquire why the Municipal Commission imposed no rate on some of the other lucrative trades and professions.⁷⁵⁰ Liassides replied with a delay of four weeks, and evaded the issue:

So far the necessity for adding to the trades and professional taxes has not arisen and this class of revenue is not one that commends itself very greatly to the Municipal Council, principally by reason of the difficulty and expense of collecting the rates.⁷⁵¹

The polarisation of the Greek community's politics, between a nationalist and a pro-government wing, linked the Municipal Commission even more tightly with the interests of the established

748. SA1:2802/1896, G. Smith, Acting Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, January 26, 1897.

749. Ibid., Minute by A. Lascelles, Queen's Advocate, February 7, 1897.

750. Ibid., A. Young, Chief Secretary, to G. Smith, Acting Commissioner of Nicosia, February 12, 1897.

751. Ibid., A. Liassides, President of Nicosia Municipal Commission, to G. Smith, Acting Commissioner of Nicosia, April 8, 1897.

shopkeepers. The faction of P. Constantinides and A. Liassides, was thereby coming into a politically damaging conflict with the rising tide of petty sellers. According to a petition by the shopkeepers, in May 1898, hawkers now arrived in the bazaar with their animals. Apart from bread their merchandise included pies, cakes and vegetables.⁷⁵² Liassides responded by siding with the established shopkeepers. Given the multitude of commodities being sold without permit, he forwarded the complaint to the District Commissioner of Nicosia, Wilfred Collet, requesting the sanctioning of additional by-laws, in order "to put a stop to the nuisance complained of".⁷⁵³ By that time, restrictions and regulations in the bazaar, whether based on custom or enacted legislation, were being ridden roughshod by a wave of breadwinners. On April 2, 1900, yet another petition by the shopkeepers complained that in a single section of the bazaar, Keoprulu Basi, hawkers of bread alone, numbered 50 to 100. What is more, they seemed to have adopted a more defiant attitude given that, according to the petition, they stood in front of the shopkeepers' premises with their animals, "without moving a pace on".⁷⁵⁴ Upon

752. SA1:2140/1898, Mustafa Sabri and others to the High Commissioner, May 16, 1898.

753. Ibid., A. Liassides, President of Nicosia Municipal Commission, to W. Collet, Commissioner of Nicosia, June 11, 1898.

754. SA1:992/1900, Evelthon Televantos and others to High Commissioner, April 2, 1900.

receiving the petition, which was passed on to him from the Chief Secretary, Liassides only requested the names of offenders and particulars of evidence, in order to prosecute them.⁷⁵⁵

Thus the British, like their Ottoman predecessors, consolidated their rule by offering posts and favours to the representatives of the establishment. So long as the lower classes were not sufficiently aware of their situation or power, this situation might continue. Though all politically conscious elements amongst the Greeks desired a change in the political status of the island they did not all desire it in the same way; their urge to action was not evenly distributed among them. By the end of the century, however, processes were under way which would finally challenge the understanding between alien power and local establishment frustrating the fundamental aspiration of national liberation.

755. Ibid., A. Liassides, President of the Municipal Commission, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, April 24, 1900.

CHAPTER 11

THE CONSOLIDATION OF NATIONALISM

I. International Factors - The Image of Greece and Turkey

Viewed from an international, rather than an insular, perspective, internal affairs in Cyprus were influenced by the prospect of a change in the island's status as well as the wider conflict between Greece and Turkey. In 1895 the Secretary of State for the Colonies stated in the Commons that, if Britain were to evacuate Cyprus, it would revert back to Turkey. Greek alarm over such a prospect was aggravated by ominous reports from Crete concerning ill-treatment of Greeks at the hands of the Ottoman authorities. During the last week of April, the Greek Cypriots held rallies all over the island, stressing that the only acceptable change in the international status of Cyprus would be union with Greece. All rallies were described by the Commissioners as civil, though as always Limassol was noted for the great number of Greek flags and blue and white banners.⁷⁵⁶ What was more noteworthy however was the composition of the rally in Nicosia. Commissioner King reported:

The numbers that attended the meeting did not, I think, exceed two thousand of which fully one half were residents of the town of Nicosia, and of these again, a very large proportion were lads of 18-20 years of age, or even younger, and it was chiefly by these last named members of the audience that the cheers were raised, and applause given to the telling points in the speakers' addresses; as also the most vociferous shouts

756. SA1:780/1895, R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, April 29, 1895.

condemning the taxes and the Tribute. The numbers that assembled at Government House were greater, I think, by three or four hundred, than those at the meeting...At this assembly too, no spectator could, I think, fail to be struck by the tender age of a very large number of those of which it was composed.⁷⁵⁷

Against the background of Nicosia's conservative stance, this was a generation gap in the making. What is more, few of these youths, who ran into several hundred, were high school boys, given that in 1894 only nine pupils had graduated from the newly-founded Pancyprian Gymnasium. As expected of town youths at the time, they must have been engaged in apprentice or wage labour. A portion of them attended, for varying lengths of time, elementary school, and had thereby received the basics of Hellenic education. Yet for all of them, their openly anti-government stand must also have been the outcome of their first contact with social reality during their conscious life and their experience of the misery and deprivation which characterized the late 1880s, and the years after. Nationalistic and anti-Turkish feeling was engulfing sections of the population which had hitherto been scarcely influenced by nationalist agitation. A deputation of leading Turks, led by the Mufti, Ali Refki Effendi, had an interview with the High Commissioner and the Executive Council, in which they complained that the Christians had adopted a menacing attitude and that ill-feeling had spread to women and

757. CO 67/91, M. King, Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, April 29, 1895. Enclosed in Sir W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to the Marquis of Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 6, 1895.

boys. According to the deputation, the disturbance was being caused by Greeks in the market place and in public houses and brothels which stayed open during the night.⁷⁵⁸

The Cretan revolt of 1896, against Ottoman rule, had a pervasive and immediate impact on internal politics in Cyprus. In response to the popular and patriotic arousal, a committee was formed, headed by the Archbishop, to express solidarity with the Cretan insurgents through collections of comforts and the offer of housing to refugees. As might be expected there was no unanimity as to whether solidarity should be limited to initiatives of a humanitarian nature. The Commissioner of Nicosia, Merton King, had become aware that some members of the committee wanted to launch a recruitment drive for volunteers who would fight in Crete, though he also believed that the majority of the committee were in fact opposed to active expressions of sympathy. In June 1896, however the authorities were alerted to the fact that a recruitment process was secretly under way and that a number of youths had already embarked for Crete.⁷⁵⁹

This was not unexpected; youths, having been raised and educated in a consciously national environment, were amenable to recruitment for a patriotic cause. The driving force behind the recruitment process was the relatively unknown figure of Nicolaos

758. SA1:266/1895, "Confidential", Interview of Ali Refki, Mufti of Cyprus, and others with Sir Walter Sendall, High Commissioner, and the members of the Executive Council, April 22, 1895.

759. SA1:1259/1896, "Confidential", M. King, Commissioner of Nicosia, to Arthur Young, Chief Secretary, July 4, 1896.

Katalanos, a Greek citizen and teacher in the Pancyprian Gymnasium. Though the social background of the recruits was not mentioned in the report, certain inferences can still be drawn about it. About two thirds of the total 75 recruits accounted for, came from Nicosia and one third from the working class suburb of Buyuk Kaimakli.⁷⁶⁰ These figures indicated labour's propensity to enlist, since in the 1891 census Kaimakli's Greek population at 1,069, had been only 14.9% of the capital's at 7,164.⁷⁶¹ The recruits of the town of Nicosia were referred to by the Commissioner as "mostly undesirable characters", thus testifying their humble origins.⁷⁶² What is more, Katalanos' agent in recruiting was Michael Hadgigavriel, son of Nicosia's aforementioned leading shoe-manufacturer, and therefore favourably placed for influencing people from the working class. In fact the only recruit whose occupation was actually referred to in the police reports was a shoemaker.⁷⁶³ It said a lot about Katalanos' drive as a nationalist leader, that no such recruiting was reported in the rest of the island, not even in the nationalist stronghold of Limassol, where the authorities had kept the activities of the local nationalists under surveillance.⁷⁶⁴

760. Ibid.

761. For these population figures see Census 1891, op. cit., pp. 28 and 27 respectively.

762. SA1:1259/1896, King to Young, op. cit.

763. Ibid., G. S. Cade, Local Commandant of Police, Nicosia, to A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, July 27, 1896.

764. See specifically ibid., R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, July 7, 1896.

However, the continuously deteriorating relations between Greece and Turkey, climaxing in the Greco-Turkish war, released sentiments in Cyprus which could not be contained. On March 25, 1897, attendance at the celebration of the national day of the Greeks far exceeded that of previous years. Phoni tis Kyprou, noted that the national day had been observed in several villages and in Nicosia, mass had been attended by all social classes of the population.⁷⁶⁵ The extent to which patriotic sentiments had engulfed the Greek Cypriots could be gauged by the sheer number of volunteers for the Greek army, who were more than 1,000. By the end of March, a catalogue compiled by the Greek Consul, Georghios Philemon, listed 556 volunteers coming from the districts of Nicosia, Famagusta, Larnaca and Kyrenia.⁷⁶⁶ The list gave details of their age, religion, place of birth and nationality, though not of their occupation. 23 of them were Greek nationals and Armenians residing in the island. The rest were Cypriots, in their late teens and early twenties.⁷⁶⁷ In a subsequent despatch,

765. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I 25 Martiou - I ethniki eorti" (The 25th of March - The national celebration), April 1/13, 1897.

766. IAYE: 1897, File A/5/1, "Onomastikos katalogos" (List of names), presented by Consul Georghios Philemon, March 30, 1897.

767. The High Commissioner noted that many of them were quite young boys, whose admission into any body of regular troops would be very doubtful (CO 67/105, "Confidential", W. Sendall, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 7, 1897).

the Greek Consul noted that another 126 men had enlisted from the districts of Limassol and Paphos, bringing to 682 the total number of volunteers who had set off from Cyprus.⁷⁶⁸ The peasantry's response was assessed in an enthusiastic report by Consul Philemon, to his Foreign Minister, Alexandros Skouzes, in which he referred to numerous arrivals from villages, who had been on the march for hours in order to catch the boats in Larnaca.⁷⁶⁹

There was an even stronger response in the towns. The population gathered on the wharves to wish the volunteers farewell and the boatmen transported them to the ships free of charge. A number of the Pancyprian Gymnasium's pupils and teachers also enrolled. However given that in 1897 only twelve youths graduated from the Gymnasium the very great majority of the young urban volunteers must have been engaged in some productive capacity. The large numbers of humble folk in the ranks of the Cypriot contingent did not signify that this stratum had become in any way politically autonomous. In Limassol, the prime mover behind the recruiting drive was Joannis Kyriakides, who had three years earlier organised the wine rally in Pera Pedi, lawyer and member of the local masonic lodge. The 200 recruits who marched through the streets of Larnaca were similarly addressed by Consul Philemon

768. No list of recruits from these two districts has been traced in the Archive of the Greek Foreign Ministry.

769. IAYE: 1897, File A/5/1, Philemon to Skouzes, March 28, 1897.

and the aforementioned Philios Zannetos who usually deputized in the Consuls' absence and was himself active in the recruitment campaign.⁷⁷⁰ Like N. Katalanos, P. Zannetos was also a Greek citizen and a freemason, though he was also quite wealthy, being a doctor and owner of the town's largest tobacco factory. Even members of the clergy were being drawn into the military struggle for Greece; they were naturally given ceremonial pride of place. The march of the volunteers in the streets of Athens was led by four Cypriot monks hoisting a Greek flag, which they had brought from Kykko monastery.⁷⁷¹

In spite of Greece's defeat, Greek Cypriot participation in the war had, on balance, proved conducive to the development of the Greek national movement in the island. Sentiments were roused at the hour of Greece's trial, patriotic articles featured in the press, collections were made in which everyone was urged to offer and a very great number of communities contributed at least one of their members to the war effort. For the first time since the British occupation, ordinary Greeks in Cyprus were involved in an issue which affected Hellenism at large. The volunteers themselves were warmly received upon their return. Most of them had fought under colonel Constandinos Smolenskis, in Velestino, the

770. See a description of the ceremony in Enosis, "I apelefsis ton Kyprion ethelondon" (The departure of Cypriot volunteers), April 22/3, 1897.

771. For a description of the scene by an actual participant, see Savvas Tserkezis, To imerologion tou viou mou (The diary of my life), Nicosia, 1988, pp. 51-52.

only battle in which the Greeks had been able to hold their own. The Limassol newspaper, Anagennisis, reported: "The good lads have returned in high and lively spirits and are ready to have another go".⁷⁷² In fact they were thereafter to be something of a nationalist bloc within the Greek community. This had, from the start, been the intention of Consul Philemon, who had viewed the recruiting process as more than a contribution to the immediate war effort. On April 1, 1897, he had written to his Foreign Minister about the volunteers:

Many of them, having tasted the freedom of Greece, will after the completion of their military service return to their island being able to teach a lot to their compatriots and to guide them to everything that is noble and patriotic.⁷⁷³

Up until 1897, firsthand experience of Greece and of the Great Idea had been effectively limited to the few upper class youths who studied in the University of Athens. In this respect the war had been a great equaliser, since the volunteers' humble origins enabled them to influence the labouring populace in ways which were denied to upper class propagandists. The conflict between Greece and Turkey also inspired a whole body of patriotic literature. Apart from articles in the press, a score of ballads enabled even the illiterate to join in the excitement of patriotic polemic. The first ballad on the subject, Georghios

772. Anagennisis, "Oi ethelondai" (The volunteers), October 9, 1897.

773. IAYE: 1897, File A/5/1, Consul G. Philemon, to A. Skouzes, Foreign Minister, April 1, 1897.

Constantinou's Poima tou Kritikou agonos en etei 1896 (Poem of the Cretan struggle in the year 1896) came out in 100 copies in 1896.⁷⁷⁴ This was the first time such literature had been put to open political use. By the following year, a second edition of the ballad came out in 1,000 copies. Public interest burgeoned during and after the war between Greece and Turkey, when three more ballads came out in a total of 4,000 copies.⁷⁷⁵

At the same time the war generated considerable anti-British sentiment. Unlike the 1882 intervention in Egypt, which demonstrated the identity between Greek and British interests, Greece's defeat in 1897 served no such purpose. In the whole Greek world popular feeling was turned against the Great Powers. According to the High Commissioner this feeling had been

much aggravated by the acts and utterances of those persons who, by publicly denouncing the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in concert with the European Powers, have represented England, in the eyes of all Greek-speaking peoples, as being in practical alliance with their enemies.⁷⁷⁶

774. I Ephimeris Kyprou, February 5, 1897.

775. In the Cyprus Gazette, February 18, 1898, see:

a) Stylianos Michaelides, To tragoudi tou Ellinotourkikou polemou (The song of the Greco-Turkish war);

b) Kyriakos Papadopoulos, O polemos Ellados kai Tourkias tou 1897 (The war between Greece and Turkey in 1897);

c) Manolakis Eleftheriou, To tragoudi tou Ellinotourkikou polemou tou 1897 (The Song of the Greco-Turkish War of 1897).

776. CO 67/106, Sir W. Sendall, High Commissioner, to Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, June 4, 1897.

Circumstances were not lacking in which the theme of Anglo-Turkish complicity could become plausible. A serious incident occurred in Famagusta, where sticks of dynamite were placed in the wood piled for the Easter bonfire at Saint Nicholas Church. The explosion amongst the unsuspecting congregation claimed 33 casualties, two of them fatal.⁷⁷⁷ Though some Turks were arrested for the incident, their subsequent release for lack of evidence accentuated amongst the Greeks the popularly held notion of a collusion between the colonial authorities and the Turks.⁷⁷⁸

The lower strata were therefore inevitably engulfed in ethnic antagonism. The Greek press reported of intercommunal tension in Nicosia, as well as the mixed suburb of Omorphita.⁷⁷⁹ During June 1897 Turks, appeared in force in events marking Queen Victoria's 60-year Jubilee, at a time when relations between the two communities were turning sour. On July 2, 1897, the Chief Secretary noted that the Mufti had complained to him regarding "the menacing attitude assumed by the Common Class of the Greek community lately and more especially since the recent festivities held on

777. See in Phoni tis Kyprou:

a) "Stygeron drama" (A heinous drama) May 19/1, 1897;
b) "I gnosti ekrixis (On the well-known explosion), May 6/18, 1897.

778. Ibid., "To en Varosiois drama - Ithoothisan oi katigoroumenoi" (The drama in Famagusta - The defendants have been acquitted), May 13/25, 1897.

779. See for instance in Phoni tis Kyprou:

a) "Atopimata ton Tourkon" (Improprieties of the Turks), May 19/1, 1897;
b) "Ta en ti polei" (Events in our town), May 6/18, 1897.

the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee". Greeks of this class used abusive language against respected members of the Turkish community. A leading Turk had been insulted by stone carriers near the village of Ayioi Omoloyides and an Imam passing on horse-back through the village of Peristerona had been ordered by Christians to dismount and pass by them on foot.⁷⁸⁰ In a meeting convened with leading Greeks for the purpose of easing the situation, the Chief Secretary mentioned a complaint made to Tankerville Chamberlain, Acting Commissioner of Nicosia, of a hoca insulted by labourers working on the Lapithos-Karavas road.⁷⁸¹

The Greek leaders complained in turn of similar insults by the Turks but agreed to exercise their influence in order to ease the situation. Tension had in fact risen to such an extent that colonial officials, who bore the responsibility for law and order, were privately relieved at Greece's defeat. On April 14, 1899, T. Chamberlain, who had by then become Commissioner of Kyrenia, observed accordingly:

I believe that had the result of that war been different, serious trouble would have arisen. It was openly announced in Egypt...that a movement would take place in Cyprus and some persons who had taken houses in Cyprus for the summer cancelled the agreement.⁷⁸²

780. SA1:1709/1897, "Memorandum - Chief Secretary's Office", July 2, 1897.

781. On this incident see ibid., T. Chamberlain, Acting Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, July 13, 1897.

782. SA1:462/1899, "Confidential", T. Chamberlain, Commissioner of Kyrenia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, April 14, 1899.

II. Nicolaos Katalanos and his Lectures to Labour

Nicolaos Katalanos, the man who had done more than anyone in recruiting for Crete in 1896, was born in 1855 in Mani, one of Greece's most indomitable regions. According to his autobiography, he belonged to a clan noble and gallant enough to have consistently resisted the authority of the Turks, as well as the great Maniat family of the Mavromichalei. After Independence, the Katalanoi became supporters of the Napaioi, the pro-Russian faction who were instrumental in bringing Capodistria as the first Governor of Greece in 1832. The murder of Capodistria by members of the Mavromichalei clan, and the spread of British influence in Greece, pushed the Napaioi aside. In 1848, when the impact of the great European revolution led to a number of local risings in Greece, the Katalanoi threw their lot with the republicans. The crushing of the revolt in Mani, by the combined forces of the Mavromichalei and the Bavarian-born King Otto, forced the Katalanoi to flee for their lives; they were only allowed to return after several years.⁷⁸³

These were family traditions of radical nationalism and of resistance to the rule of both kocabaşıs and alien monarchs. In his youth N. Katalanos was educated in the Evangelical School of Smyrna and the University of Athens, where he became an en-

783. For details of the conflict see N. Katalanos' account in ZENON, "Paidikai anamniseis - To khorion mou - Oi Katelanoi" (Childhood memories - My village - The Katelanoi), No. V [E'], March 15, 1906, pp. 155-157.

thusiastic advocate of the Great Idea. In 1893 N. Katalanos accepted a posting to teach Physics in the Pancyprian Gymnasium that was founded that year in Nicosia.⁷⁸⁴ Hence began a remarkable involvement in the affairs of the island that was to last for the next 28 years. His criticism over what he saw as the school-board's submissive attitude towards the British authorities led, in July 1896, to his dismissal. For disliking the Paschalis-Liassides faction he now had private as well as public reasons.

From the outset of British rule, nationalists had challenged conservatives in terms of their devotion to Hellenic patriotism. Katalanos however effected a cardinal change in the pattern of Greek politics in Cyprus by expanding and elaborating the terms of political discourse: the traditional - "more patriot than thou" - line of Limassol's nationalists he reinforced with an ideology reminiscent in some way of the Tiers État's challenge against the Ancien Regime in France. In disseminating Enlightenment ideas, Katalanos wished to give a natural account of the world. Though this was not elaborated in opposition to Christianity, the fact that he turned to nature as the source of truth meant that he eschewed theological speculation. Natural science in Cyprus had hitherto been taught, as part of the secondary school syllabus, to children from the appropriate social station

784. See N. Katalanos' "Apomnimonevmata i Aftoviographia" (Memoirs or Autobiography). The surviving fragments of this manuscript have been published by Pavlos Hadjimarkos in Kypriakai Spoudai, Volume XLIII (MF'), 1979, pp. 201-229.

and in a manner which did not call into question the religiously justified picture of the social order. In February 1896, shortly before his dismissal from the Gymnasium, Katalanos had asked permission to use the school's premises and scientific instruments for the education of working people. Upon his receiving no reply he publicised his views through the press:

In the programme of lectures for the teaching of experimental physics and chemistry, the few instruments of the Gymnasium have been purchased by the contributions of the trader, the artisan and the labourer, and should therefore be operating for their benefit.

Those waging tirelessly the struggle of life must be taught the most suitable and productive use of their physical and mental qualities and learn, under supervision, how to follow the progress of advanced nations in industry and the crafts.⁷⁸⁵

The termination of his contract by a school-board, already upset about his criticism of their stand toward the authorities, effectively turned him into a free political agent and de facto leader of the anti-establishment front. In September 1896, the newspaper Evagoras came under the editorship of Katalanos. Six months later the nationalists of Nicosia scored a major victory by winning the elections for the committee of Agapi tou Laou, which had hitherto been presided by A. Liassides. The new president was Katalanos. Under his direction the newspaper and the club soon evolved into the twin axes of radical and nationalist agitation in the island. During the first year of his presidency in Agapi tou Laou, Katalanos began delivering some of the lec-

785. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Atopos arnisis" (Incongruous refusal), March 8/20, 1896.

tures he had in mind to the labouring population. These had, by November 1897, grown into a syllabus of a sort, which would last until March, when several labourers left for seasonal employment. The list of lectures was as follows:

Religious Instruction. Interpretation of the Gospel and Christian Morality.

National History. The mythical period.

Geography. Physical, political, comparative and commercial.

Experimental Physics and its application in the crafts.

Chemistry. General principles and experiments.

Cosmography. On heavenly bodies and stars in general and the planet system in particular.

Geology and Mineralogy, elementary facts.

Elements of Phytology. Anatomy and physiology of plants.

Political Economy. On capital. On machinery. On cooperation. On exchange and currency. On labour and wage. On interest and usury. On exchange and credit. On freedom of trade.

Commercial Law. Optional.

Literature. History of Mycenaean art.

Hygiene. A variety of subjects, chosen by the lecturer.⁷⁸⁶

To an audience conditioned by the precepts of divine creation, these lectures may have been disturbing in implication. Geology gave hints of a new chronology, which was difficult to fit into the time-span allowed by the Old Testament. Cosmology reduced the status of the earth to that of one planet among many. Experimental science seemed to establish itself on the basis of verified fact. It is not clear whether the lectures stressed the principle of order in God's creation, though Katalanos was clearly not putting forward an alternative Jacobin world-view -

786. Evagoras, "Dhimosiai dialexeis" (Public lectures), August 12, 1897.

religion was too deeply rooted amongst the poor for any such folly. More far-reaching however, were his lectures on political economy. Under the guise of disinterested science, initially, Katalanos presented his vision of a new political order in the island, in which neither the colonial administration nor the privileged strata attached to it, would have a place. His lectures were derived from seminars delivered to the labouring classes at the Turgot School in Paris and were based on economic principles permeating the Third Republic.⁷⁸⁷ As the institution's name implied, they were critical of the corporate economic and political structures of Bourbon France.

Katalanos presented the nation as constituted by useful work - either private or public - and by the citizens who performed that work, within a bourgeois society divided into four functionally distinct, but politically equal classes, according to the type of productive work they performed in agriculture, industry, commerce and labour. In Bourbon France this division, propagated by Abbe Sieyes, had consciously and effectively undermined the structuring of society into estates. Though this division in the Third Republic was a recipe for stability, in Cyprus, where the dominant political ideology was still ancien, it served to demonstrate the falsity of a hierarchical community, bound by respect for, and subjection to, the senior clergy and the established families connected with them. Katalanos noted no con-

787. Ibid., "Peri katanomis tou ploutou" (On the distribution of wealth), Part B', November 25, 1899.

traditions between the classes of useful work; adherents to his ideas included too many bourgeois, and even casualties of the establishment. His lectures stressed the mutuality of interest between labour and capital, the overall benefits accruing to society as a consequence of mechanization and the productive capacities inherent in the entrepreneur.⁷⁸⁸

At the same time development in manufacturing industry should not be the result of British investments, which would subdue the economic life of the island. The Greeks of Cyprus owned enough capital, which could be invested profitably.⁷⁸⁹ In this sense, Katalanos seemed to be the apostle of what might be described as the "national bourgeoisie". Hence, the greatest gap in Katalanos' radicalism: the absence of criticism on the issue of money-lending. This he could afford. The leadership of the old establishment, having openly identified themselves with usurious activities, had in effect also spared him from having to resort to charges which would embarrass the bourgeois plebeians in his camp, who also invested their savings in the lending of money. A debt ridden and discontented peasantry was placated with tirades on taxation and with a measure of anti-clericalism. Only a frac-

788. See the following lectures in Evagoras:

a) "Peri kefalaiou" (On capital), January 13, 20 and 27, 1899;

b) "I idiotiki protovoulia" (Private initiative), January 11, 1899;

c) "Ai mikhanai en ti ekonomiki" (Machinery in economics), January 11, 16 and 23, 1899.

789. Ibid., "Episphaleis gnomai" (Mistaken opinions), February 16, 1897.

tion of the Church's resources was allocated to causes which were of benefit to the community as a whole. Clerical and monastic establishments presented no financial accounts; priests and monks were known to divert the Church's wealth to their relations or their private vices.⁷⁹⁰

In towns, lay drones were not identified with capitalists, who were hardly-existent as a class. Many of those attending the lectures in Agapi tou Laou were themselves employers of a journeyman or apprentice. Rather than locate exploitation in class terms, Katalanos made an alternative definition of social parasites: they were Cypriots attached to the alien government, which in turn exploited the people. A. Liassides, President of the Municipal Commission and increasingly unpopular with the lower classes, was the most inviting target. Appointed and paid by the British he was a petty tyrant, vindictive against the poor and all who were least capable of defending themselves.⁷⁹¹ Municipal taxation was heavier than government taxation and was allocated arbitrarily;⁷⁹² the Municipal Commission was competing with the Government, nazirs, tax-collectors and forest wardens, in pursuit of taxpaying tradesmen. Scores of people were being

790. Ibid., "Ai zeteiai kai o engamos kliros" (Zeteiai and married members of the clergy, May 31, 1900.

791. Ibid., "O tyranniskos tis Lefkosias" (The petty-tyrant of Nicosia), October 27, 1899.

792. Ibid., "Dhimotiki tyrannia" (Municipal tyranny), February 4, 1900.

fined for alleged violations of bazaar regulations. Others had to settle out of court, making to municipal employees payments for which they received no receipts.⁷⁹³

Katalanos was essentially recapitulating, in political language, grievances which had for years been accumulating amongst peasants, tradesmen and the labouring poor in general, and channelling them against both, the colonial authorities and their Cypriot lackeys. This was a radical shift in the terms of political discourse in the island; it was consolidated in Katalanos' discussion of public service, the area in national life in which the senior clergy and the old establishment had always claimed to perform their distinct services to the people at large. This traditional conception was flatly contradicted by Katalanos, who generalised the offensive against Liassides to encompass the Cypriots who were office holders in the administrative structure. The services performed by them were no more than the manifestation of their narrow interests and the implementation of colonial policy. Katalanos thus removed these office holders' last claim to utility to the community. They were in retrospect no more than a burden, which could only weaken the people's effort to rid themselves of alien oppression. Public posts should thereafter be taken up by new leaders and turned into fora of national ideas. Hence Katalanos supplemented his original implicit definition of the nation as a body of producers working together on nature, by

793. Ibid., "Adhisopitos diogmos; soria aghoghon" (Ruthless persecution; a pile of law suits), February 11, 1900.

an explicitly political definition as a body of associates working for the promotion of the national cause. In terms of both definitions the old guard of Cypriot politics was ostracised.⁷⁹⁴

The structure of hegemonic relations in Cypriot society was indeed crumbling and being gradually replaced by a new one, with highly disruptive consequences for the political order. In this process the contribution of the radical nationalists, Katalanos in particular, was to define a role for the labouring poor: nationalist, anti-colonial and anti-establishment. Though elements from all three of these tenets had traditionally been inherent in the make-up of popular consciousness, this was the first time they were integrated into a coherent ideology. This was no mean task. Katalanos had to call together a class, which was politically passive but also undisciplined, into an alliance with the tradesmen, petty shopkeepers, and even money-lenders, who made up the nationalist camp. The labouring poor were to be given a new role which, though not autonomous, would be greater than the one they had hitherto been assigned to within the conservative view of a herd of client-supporters. For a start, they deserved an improvement in their standard of living, a modest one in line with their modest expectations:

National progress and prosperity is based on the promotion and happiness of those who make up the nation of citizens, most of whom belong to the working class,

794. See the following articles in Evagoras:

a) "Oi koinonikoi lymeones" (Scourges of society), January 20, 1898;

b) "Anthropoi epikindynoi" (Dangerous people), August 6, 1899.

which is the main corpus of the nation; the safest guarantee for the moral and spiritual progress of this class lies in the improvement of their material and moral condition.⁷⁹⁵

Nor should the forging of this alliance be hindered by the unruly attitude of these poor, which should not altogether be cause of alarm. The reason why youth had in the past been so disciplined was the authoritarianism of the Ottoman regime, forcing people to confine themselves within the household. Such a mode of life, though preserving a family morality and an ethnic character of sorts, retarded the creation of nationally-minded citizens, who would be active in the wider struggle of social life:

Youths who have been bred free and have not experienced the caustic injuries of the whip of slavery appear to be untamed. They are a cause of annoyance and astonishment to their elders, who do not enjoy the respect they themselves had, at the time of their youth, been showing to old people.

Rather than seeing the world as a realm of sin and disorder, in need of authority and discipline, Katalanos posed a vision in which men, as natural beings, were essentially equal. He was therefore critical of those Cypriots who relied on the foreign administration to dominate their own folk. Following the revelation that a Prelate had seconded the Commissioner's view on the need for whipping juvenile offenders, Katalanos commented:

In past times Turkish power would exploit the petty ambition of such people and turn them into tyrants of their co-nationals and co-religionists. The Turks would confer upon them certain offices which, though minor, would be sufficient in rendering them into humble ser-

795. Ibid., "Logos enarktirios epi tes dhimosies dialexesin" (Inaugural address on the programme of public lectures), November 4, 1897.

vants of their rulers and arrogant oppressors of the people of their race. The machinations of these advocates of whipping aim at the revival of this age, because they cannot bear the fact that those who are poorer and younger do not bow before them, nor rise at their passing with their right hand on their stomach.⁷⁹⁶

One of the most positive aspects of Katalanos' Enlightenment ideas, had been his belief in a beneficent providence regulating the promptings of men. In place of the repressive and disciplinary role which Christian pessimism had formerly attributed to public authority, Katalanos argued that the maintenance of order depended on the adoption of a humanitarian approach toward the labouring poor. In the Ottoman heritage of ranks and orders, labour was still despised as a stigma of baseness. Katalanos attempted to raise labour from the disdain it was held and present it as an essential foundation of human fulfilment:

Should employment be offered to the people, who live in disgust and despair, public order and security will be fully restored and the annual statistics on criminality will remain white and blank. If you think that a people can be moralised by whipping you are terribly deluded...

Take away from the policemen's hands the barbaric whips, through which order is momentarily restored, but which is bound to transform the people into either beasts or revolutionaries. Offer employment and every crime shall instantly come to an end, because labour is prayer, and a man who is genuinely praying can commit no crime.⁷⁹⁷

796. Ibid., "I yper tis mastigoseos epiklisis" (The invocation of whipping), June 11, 1899.

797. Ibid., "Ergasia kai englima" (Labour and crime), June 9, 1898. On the same subject see also, ibid., "Englima kai penia" (Crime and poverty), July 15, 1897.

Traditional loyalty to trade, which had proven so sectarian in the past, was also challenged implicitly. An alternative source of inspiration was the artistic heritage of the island, which abounded with ancient Greek and Byzantine monuments. Social structures of past events reflected the consciousness of the people. Having survived the erection of Frankish fortifications and Ottoman mosques, this consciousness should likewise not be diluted by the ugly buildings of the colonial administration. The Greek craftsmen of Cyprus should be inspired by their past, as did their counterparts in contemporary Athens, where buildings were a reminder of classical antiquity.⁷⁹⁸

Prima facie, the national movement which was developing toward the end of the century had no democratic aspirations; no Jacobins espoused the Rights of Man in the masonic lodges and even Katalanos stopped short of proclaiming the universality of these rights. At the same time the outlook of the radical nationalists stood in marked contrast to the conservatism of Nicosia's upper classes, who could only look down upon those who were still outside the political system though the threat to their supremacy had become visible. The more alert bourgeois of Limassol and Larnaca, steeped in a tradition of defiance to

798. For an elaboration on Katalanos' ideas on crafts in Cyprus see ibid.:

a) "Oikodomi kai syneidisis ethniki" (Masonry and national consciousness), September 9, 1897;

b) "I ethniki syneidisis en ti tekhnē" (National consciousness in art), September 16, 1897;

c) "Anangi tekhnis ethniki" (The necessity of national art), September 23, 1897.

higher authority, had never lost touch with their own people. The differences in attitude between the two elites were exemplified in an editorial of Phoni tis Kyprou, on the apparently neutral subject of Nicosia's athletic gym:

What is more, after the establishment of the gym - let us be honest about it - we failed to do what we should have done, that is we did not try to make physical education attractive to all social classes. As soon as the labouring population, the artisans and petty traders began to arrive, those of the higher social class departed, feeling themselves degraded to train next to the common folk. Disappointment naturally spread amongst the popular classes, who in turn also abandoned the gym...This has not however happened in Limassol. In that town the athletic drive is led by educated youth from the higher social classes. They do in fact set an example of social equality and fraternity in the supreme national struggle of building bodies and cultivating souls.⁷⁹⁹

So long as the fundamental issue remained opposition to the establishment and the colonial government, there was a natural confluence of interest between the popular movement and the middle class leadership. The alliance was viable provided the poor did not ask that their own needs be satisfied; given the undeveloped state of social polarisation this was a viable proposition. At the turn of the century the social framework of the manufacturing sector of the economy, had not been undermined to the extent that points of transition could be clearly perceived. The nationalists centred around Evagoras, were therefore willing to involve the labouring poor in politics, though this involve-

799. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I gymnastiki - Diati ysteroumen" (Physical education - Why we are lagging behind), May 12/25, 1900.

ment was not meant to stir them into demanding a larger share in total wealth; in the event of distress they should expect their comfort from the benefits of mutuality. In this sense, there was not much difference in the role allocated to organised labour between the editorials of Evagoras and those of the conservative press. Where Evagoras differed was in allocating to labour a political role, within the masonic framework of class harmony and cooperation. Trade unions would exert a stabilising effect in relations between the bourgeoisie and the state and would enlighten lawmakers regarding a fairer distribution of tax burdens.⁸⁰⁰ The primary task of trade unions however was located in the field of national politics:

Such associations are imperative in countries such as our own, governed by a foreign nation, whose interests are different and quite often contrary to ours. They are absolutely essential for staging a common defence against all insidious rulers, who cover up their deceit under the guise of genuine concern.⁸⁰¹

Organised labour, being part of the national movement, would be counterposed not only to the alien rulers but also to Cypriots who cooperated with them; the leadership of this movement however would be reserved for members of a higher class:

The harm caused by the surveillance of a Government which is alien to a people and their aspirations can be just as great if executed by members of the same race...If workmen are not to be deceived by fraudulent

800. Evagoras, "Mikra khronika" (Petty chronicles), November 25, 1897.

801. Ibid., "Ta ton syntekhnion agatha" (The benefits of trade unions), January 27, 1898.

men it is imperative that they confer together, in meetings, where they exchange views on common issues and are being enlightened by their superiors.⁸⁰²

Evagoras' contribution was cardinal in the promulgation of radical nationalist ideas, both in the towns and in the remotest corners of the countryside. The paper played a formative role by focusing attention on the problem of privilege and by providing the readership with a political programme in the radical-conservative struggle. The nucleus of agitation however was in the tradesmen and labour clubs, new ones founded by the nationalists or existing ones taken over. In 1899 Proodos, in the quarters of Ayios Kassianos and Aliniotissa, and Elpis in Ayios Loukas, began to operate as branches of Agapi tou Laou.⁸⁰³ By the beginning of the following year Enosis, in the Ayios Joannis and Ayios Antonios quarters, had also been added into what was becoming a chain of clubs, operating under the overall presidency of Katalanos.⁸⁰⁴ These clubs were led by men who cried for nationalism and identified nationalism with political reform; together with the middle class lodges of the freemasons, tradesmen clubs constituted a formidable political structure, erected in opposition to the circle of the Archbishopric and the conservative establishment centred in Nicosia.

802. Ibid., "I proodos ton syntekhnion" (The progress of trade unions), February 10, 1898.

803. Ibid., "Anagnostirion i 'Proodos'" (Proodos reading club), September 1, 1899.

804. Ibid., "Anagnostirion i 'Enosis'" (Enosis reading club), January 21, 1900.

CHAPTER 12

THE ASSAULT AGAINST THE OLD ORDER

I. The Archiepiscopal Question

In June 1899, the District Commissioner of Kyrenia, Tankerville Chamberlain, sent an anxious despatch to the Chief Secretary:

Having watched the march of the Hellenic movement for now some thirteen years, I must respectfully submit the opinion that unless Her Majesty's Government intend to favour the annexation of Cyprus to Greece serious trouble will sooner or later *⁸⁰⁵ if something is not speedily done to check what is going on.⁸⁰⁶

What was more alarming, was the fact that the observation came from the district which had hitherto been the most timid and quiet; the Commissioner's report signified that the entire island was in turmoil. The conservative establishment were for their part equally anxious about the incoming tide of discontent and nationalist agitation. A sense of what was in store had already been given in the October 1896 elections for the Legislative Council. That was the first time when an electoral contest was, even if mildly, imbued with an ideological content. A number of candidates declared themselves ethnikoi (national); two young Athens educated lawyers, Theophanis Theodotou in the Nicosia-

805. * A verb is obviously missing in the original text.

806. CO 67/119, "Confidential", T. Chamberlain, Commissioner of Kyrenia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, June 7, 1899. Enclosure in "Confidential", Sir W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 19, 1899.

Kyrenia constituency and Joannis Economides in Famagusta-Larnaca, had formed a loosely defined camp with older nationalists, such as Philios Zannetos and Joannis Kyriakides. All four were freemasons.⁸⁰⁷

At the same time the elections were not hotly contested, given that the ranks of the Greeks were already closed on account of events in Crete. Evagoras however called upon voters to support T. Theodotou and J. Economides, new political personalities, who would struggle for the rights of the Greek Cypriots.⁸⁰⁸ This was the first time in the history of elections for the Legislative Council, when the number of registered voters went up, from 12,232 in 1891 to 14,763 in 1896, representing an increase of 20.7%.⁸⁰⁹ This rise might in part be attributed to the gradual recovery of the economy; in the main however, it was an indication of the heightening political awareness and increasing interest in elections, on the part of the labouring poor, which made more of them wish to pay their vergi tax and enter their name on the voters' lists.

807. See the names of the most prominent freemasons of the period in N. Katalanos, Kypriakon Lefkoma - O Zenon (Zeno - The Cyprus Album), Nicosia, 1914, p. 182.

808. Evagoras, "Oi ypefthinoi" (Those responsible), October 17, 1896.

809. SA1:651/1896, "Return Respecting the Elections for the Legislative Council".

The result of the October 1896 elections was acclaimed as a significant victory by the nationalists; their candidates were not only elected but also headed the polls in their constituencies.⁸¹⁰ The conservatives however still held the majority of seats in the Legislative Council and enjoyed a near monopoly of posts reserved for Greeks in the administration. What is more, the centre of power in Greek politics, the Archbishopric, was secure in their hands. The ailing Sophronios, having held the post since 1865, was the embodiment of stability from the days when the traditional establishment reigned supreme. His increasingly senile condition had in fact been brought to their advantage, as the administration of the Church was left to a handful of Prelates based in the Archbishopric, who decided all issues in co-operation with the Abbots and the circle of P. Constantinides and A. Liassides. Toward the end of 1899 however, the Archbishop's physical deterioration placed the issue of his succession in the centre stage of Cypriot politics and fuelled the pace of preparations for the coming contest. Given the fact that the Bishop of Paphos had passed away and his throne was still vacant, the contest would be narrowed down to the two remaining metropolitan Bishops: Kyrillos Vassiliou of Kyrenia, who was the establishment's choice, and Kyrillos Papadopoulos of Kitium, who was favored by the nationalists.

810. See Evagoras' editorial "Evge eis ton laon" (Congratulations to the people), October 31, 1896.

In December 1899, Ierotheos Tecnopoulos arrived in Cyprus, a preacher enjoying the patronage of both the Patriarchate of Constantinople and John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury. The conservatives planned to give their own reply to the nationalists in ideological terms and to base their campaign on the appeal of religion. Tecnopoulos was obviously meant to counter the personal influence of Katalanos, who was by then being openly denounced in the conservative press as a godless freemason.⁸¹¹ During the spring of 1900, Tecnopoulos increased the frequency of his sermons in defence of Orthodox Christianity. On Sunday morning he preached at the church of Aliniotissa and in the afternoon at Phaneromeni. The conservative establishment rallied to these sermons, being at the same time anxious to put themselves across as leaders of an alliance of all classes. On May 2, Tecnopoulos' sermon was, according to Phoni tis Kyprou, "attended by a large number of the developed social class".⁸¹²

Three weeks later, on May 22, Archbishop Sophronios passed away. Upon the vacancy occurring, the custom would be for the Bishop of Paphos, by virtue of seniority amongst the three sees, to be constituted Guardian and be entrusted with arrangements by which the Christian inhabitants would elect the special represen-

811. See for instance the challenges to Katalanos by Archimandrite Philotheos:

a) Phoni tis Kyprou, "Eise i den eise?" (Are you or are you not?), February 28/9, 1900;

b) Ibid., Supplement, "O massonismos kai o k. Katalanos" (Freemasonry and Mr. Katalanos), February 11/23, 1900.

812. Ibid., "O cosmos" (The world), May 5/18, 1900.

tatives for the archiepiscopal election. They would in turn choose general representatives, who, in the company of the remaining members of the Holy Synod, would elect the new Archbishop. Owing to the vacancy in Paphos the duty would, by right, devolve upon the Bishop of Kitium, as next in rank. The Synod however, dominated by the Abbots and the Bishop of Kyrenia, would not agree that the office of Guardian be vested to the Bishop of Kitium, thus forcing his withdrawal from the Synod. Both sides now rallied behind their favourite candidate. Regional loyalties were a powerful factor in deciding allegiances, in a contest which assumed an additional and personal dimension; the nationalists, supporting the Bishop of Kitium became the Kitiakoi, whereas the conservatives likewise became the Kyreniakoi. The fundamentally political contest, which had been seething for a generation, taking place within the framework of a dispute between Bishops, has likewise been known as the Archiepiscopal Question.⁸¹³

Though the traditional days of celebration of the syn-tekhniai, Saint Spyridon's and Saint Andreas', were still eight months ahead, the working people of Nicosia were now urged to attend church and listen to Tecnopoulos' sermons. His powers of

813. For a brief and authoritative account of the first phase of the issue, May 1900 - December 1901, see John Hackett, "The Archiepiscopal Question in Cyprus", Irish Church Quarterly Review, October 1908, pp. 320-328.

oratory were, according to Phoni tis Kyprou, "testified in all his sermons by the unprecedented attendance of all social classes".⁸¹⁴ At the same time the conservatives realised the need for setting up an organisation which would function as a counter to the chain of nationalist clubs centred in Agapi tou Laou. Such a task could not be undertaken by the defunct Kypriakos Syllogos. The conservatives therefore set about forming a new and politically reliable club, which materialised in early July. The club's name was Orthodoxia and it was presided over by Tecnopoulos himself.⁸¹⁵ One month later Phoni tis Kyprou, reported that at a meeting held in the Orthodoxia club the assembled persons, representing all social classes, had completely filled all the large rooms of the club's premises. A note of anxiety was betrayed in the report, according to which there was fortunately time enough left for scholars and merchants, industrialists and workers, to shake hands for the completion of their noble purpose.⁸¹⁶ The following week an editorial noted that the most excellent elements of the capital had rallied under the standard of Christ and that all social classes, from the scientist to the worker, were represented in the association.⁸¹⁷

814. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Ieron kyrigma" (Holy sermon), June 16/26, 1900.

815. Ibid., "Eidiseis tis evdomados" (News of the week), July 7/20, 1900.

816. Ibid., "Anagennisis" (Revival), August 11/24, 1900.

817. Ibid., "Zitimata - En somation" (Issues - An association), August 18/31, 1900.

Despite efforts to present Orthodoxia as embracing all classes, there was no hiding the fact that the association was led by the conservative establishment of the capital. The most clearcut evidence of the leadership's social background, and of their association with the colonial administration, is given in a report of the Commissioner of Nicosia, T. Chamberlain, to the Chief Secretary, on February 18, 1901. Three weeks earlier the leadership of Orthodoxia had submitted a petition to the Chief Secretary, requesting permission to publish a magazine called Christianiki Alitheia (Christian Truth).⁸¹⁸ Having examined their petition, Chamberlain wrote to the Chief Secretary:

- a. The first signatory is, I understand, an interpreter or assistant interpreter in your own office, and in receipt of Gov. pay.
- b. J. Vergopoulos is employed in a tobacco factory - a most respectable man.
- c. A. J. Markides, a merchant and " " "
- d. M. G. Pikis, a merchant and respectable
- e. M. Theoharides, a merchant " " "
- f. Socratis Kyriakides, a merchant, owner of the premises leased for the L. R. O. (Land Registry Office)
- g. C. M. Constantinides. Clerk in P. F. (Principal Forest) Office.
- h. J. G. Ipsilantis (brother-in-law to Mr. Jaboura at Larnaca, and probably the Collector of Customs there and the Commissioner knows more than I do about him...) Otherwise I know nothing against him and knew him to be respectable.
- i. M. Scoufarides. I do not know.
- j. P. J. Markides, a respectable merchant, son of J. Markides.⁸¹⁹

818. SA1:377/1901, N. Kallonas and others to the Chief Secretary, January 24, 1901.

819. Ibid., Minute by T. J. Chamberlain, Commissioner of Nicosia, to Arthur Young, Chief Secretary, February 18, 1901.

The establishment attempted to use religion as the cause around which the faithful could rally. Phoni tis Kyprou, the mouthpiece of the Kyreniakoi, published the denunciation which had been hurled 85 years earlier against freemasonry by Archbishop Kyprianos.⁸²⁰ Prima facie, this was a formidable charge; Kyprianos had, after his execution in 1821, been acclaimed as a national hero and his edicts would be expected to carry considerable weight in an Eastern Orthodox community. The rest of the Kyreniakoi press, Salpinx in Limassol, Enosis in Larnaca, and the new and fiercely anti-masonic Kyprios, in Kyrenia, joined in the campaign against the sect. Eventually, the charge of freemasonry was even levelled against the candidate of the camp for the Archiepiscopal throne, the Bishop of Kitium who, though denying it, would staunchly refuse to condemn the sect, and his most active supporters.

In the same way that the Kitiakoi had made the Nation a political slogan, the Kyreniakoi now made Christianity another political slogan. Yet the appeal to religion could no longer confer sufficient elan upon the establishment. The nationalists refused to lay themselves open to the charges of the Kyreniakoi and argued that freemasonry was quite compatible with Christian Orthodoxy, to which they stressed their devotion. Even the most radically minded leaders of the Kitium camp would not consider

820. Phoni tis Kyprou, "O aphorismos tou ethnomartyros Arkhiepiskopou Kyprianou kata ton masonon" (The denunciation of the national martyr, Archbishop Kyprianos, against the freemasons), August 25, 1900.

presenting themselves as religious sceptics or agnostics. On the contrary, they were quite prepared to settle accounts with their adversaries within the accepted frame of rules and values, in terms of an archiepiscopal election, and to rally behind one of the two Bishops in the island. What is more, the Kitiakoi produced evidence according to which the candidate of the Kyreniakoi had, during his studies in Athens, been a disciple of the theologian Apostolos Macrakis, who had been denounced as a heretic by the Church of Greece. This countercharge, though denied by the Bishop of Kyrenia, did stifle the cutting edge of the conservative campaign.⁸²¹

The first show-down took place on September 3, 1900, at the elections of the special representatives. The Kitiakoi emerged victorious, having based their campaign on the need for a nationally minded Church, whose finances and accounts would be subject to public auditing. Despite the charges of heresy hurled against them, the Kitiakoi won the overwhelming majority of special representatives, who in their turn elected 47 Kitiakoi out of a total of 66 general representatives. The Kyreniakoi challenged the regularity of electoral procedures in several parishes, confident in the fact that their objections would be heard by the members

821. On these charges and countercharges see G. Frangoudes, Historia tou Arkhiepiskopikou Zitimatou Kyprou, 1900-1910 (History of the Archiepiscopal Question in Cyprus), Alexandria, 1911, pp. 40-49.

of the Synod, who, to a man, were supporters of the Bishop of Kyrenia; in this way the majority of the Kitiakoi would be reduced below the minority of the Kyreniakoi.⁸²²

Stalemate thus ensued in the electoral process. Meanwhile tempers ran high amongst the population, which had been divided into two rival camps. Rural communities lent themselves more readily to loyalist causes and listened to the appeals against the nationalists, whose leaders often doubled as merchants and money-lenders themselves. In the region of Nicosia, where the new middle class was weak and the influence of the Prelates was strong, there were communities which showed themselves to be not only resistant but positively hostile to the new ideas propagated in Evagoras. Such was the village of Vatili, lying between Nicosia and Famagusta and only ten kilometres from Prastio, the Bishop of Kyrenia's home-village. That was solid conservative territory. According to Phoni tis Kyprou, on Sunday June 20, 1900, Tecnopoulos delivered a sermon in the village church, which was full of people from Vatili as well as the surrounding villages. The effect was the Cypriot equivalent of a Church and King riot:

At the completion of the holy sermon and when the people, full of enthusiasm took to the streets, nothing was heard but the heavy curses against those who undermined the foundations of the Orthodox Church. The most noble preacher departed for Nicosia accompanied by a dense crowd which screamed sky-high: "Down with Masonry, down with Masonry".⁸²³

822. Hackett, Archiepiscopal, op. cit., pp. 323-324.

823. Phoni tis Kyprou, "O kos Tecnopoulos en Vatili" (Mr Tecnopoulos in Vatili), June 9/22, 1900.

Similar sentiments were also encountered in the towns. On April 8, 1901, Thomas Greenwood, Local Commandant of Police in Larnaca, reported that the American Chapel had been destroyed by a fire which had been set intentionally. All enquiries had failed to detect the perpetrators and the missionaries stated that they had no grounds to suspect any one in particular:

But from what I hear there appears to be a certain amount of ill-feeling against them amongst the lower classes of the Orthodox community who considered them to be, and called them masons, for their endeavours to convert persons of the different sects to their own religious ideas.⁸²⁴

II. Politics of Deference and Politics of Disrespect

Such fanaticism was turned to direct political advantage by the conservative establishment, who realised the value of a riotous body of supporters. These were mostly recruited from amongst the half-educated, half-employed poor, who were dependent on alms provided by the Municipal Commission and the Church and/or were dragged into adopting abnormal ways of living or working. Though the number of paupers and beggars had at the beginning of the occupation been negligible, by the turn of the century the situation had changed considerably. A report of Wilfred Collet, Commissioner of Nicosia, on May 2, 1902, accounted for 196 long-term unemployed people and another 160 unable to earn sufficiently for their basic needs. These cases were

824. SA1:931/1901, T. Greenwood, Local Commandant of Police, Larnaca, to A. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, April 8, 1901.

practically permanent though the position of the latter could be less hard in a good year. At the time of the report, there were also people who could maintain themselves only in good years but were unable to find work during bad times. During the year of the report, which was exceptionally bad, these seasonally unemployed reached the figure of 560.⁸²⁵ The two previous years, 1900-1901, though not as bad as 1902, were also fairly poor years. It can therefore be assumed that during these two years, when political tensions came to a head, there were hundreds of people in distress, in addition to those who were permanently in a state of pauperism. From this mass of paupers and poor, the Kyreniakoi drew considerable support.

On September 7, 1900, Phoni tis Kyprou, published a letter against Katalanos, from a number of inhabitants of Kaimakli.⁸²⁶ The offensive wording of the letter provoked a tough reply from Evagoras. Most signatories were contemptuously singled out by name; their lot was neither representative of the village community nor sophisticated enough to be able to formulate opinions of their own. Two of the signatories, a house servant and a labourer, were hardly literate. Another eight - two shepherds, three masons, one housepainter, one labourer and one with no specified employment - were completely illiterate. Three sig-

825. SA1:1368/1902, Wilfred Collet, Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, May 9, 1902.

826. Ibid., "Anoikti epistoli" (An open letter), September 25/7, 1900.

natories had had trouble with the law - a ploughmaker had served a prison sentence for having sprayed excreta at doors in his village, a shoeshine had been sentenced for carrying a knife and the third, who was completely illiterate, had been sentenced to six months in prison for having chopped off the tails of two asses.⁸²⁷ The person heading the list had recently led a group of thugs who opposed Katalanos' entry in the village of Trakhonas, outside Nicosia. He was an unemployed ex-convict, who was to undergo trial for having beaten up two harlots.⁸²⁸

Lumpen elements were also, according to Evagoras, openly employed as thugs by leaders of the Kyrenian camp. One of them was known to move around with an escort of three: the first was an ex-policeman who had been expelled for conduct unbecoming the force and had thereafter been sentenced to imprisonment for having caused a brawl at the wedding of his sister; another henchman had served several prison sentences; the third had been taught reading at a branch of Agapi tou Laou which he later abandoned, committed an offence and was fined in court. Having left his job he was on full-time pay of the "gang".⁸²⁹ Such derogatory references to supporters of the Kyrenian camp, in the mouthpiece of the Kitiakoi, were of course coloured. Still, the editors of

827. Evagoras, "Oi stylloi tis 'Orthodoxias'" (The pillars of Orthodoxia), August 31, 1900.

828. Ibid., "Oi efpatriidai tis spiras" (The noblemen of the gang), August 24, 1900

829. Ibid., "Oi syndrophoi tou Hadjisocrati" (The comrades of Hadjisocratis), August 31, 1900.

Evagoras, having already been convicted for libel, would have hardly risked describing their adversaries in terms which could not be defended in court.⁸³⁰ In fact no libel proceedings were instituted by the persons concerned, who limited themselves to replying, in Phoni tis Kyprou, that Katalanos was heaping slander on honest working men.⁸³¹

The unprecedented ferocity of the political conflict deeply divided Cypriot society and inaugurated the era of mass politics in the island. This situation had drawn the lazzaroni of Nicosia, living a life of vagrancy and without any idea of what to do, into the contest. Many of them, having never been regularly employed, had found themselves, in most phases of their daily existence, at the mercy of the traditional alms-giving elite - the establishment classes of Nicosia and the Prelates. Such elements formed a garrison of sorts for the Archbishopric's premises. Their usefulness was demonstrated on October 16, when the elected Kitiakoi general representatives arrived in Nicosia, intending to confer with the Holy Synod. In the event the archbishopric was guarded by these lazzaroni, who physically prevented the entry of the Kitiakoi general representatives. The Commandant of Police in Nicosia reported that, on October 17, he was informed of the

830. See the public apology to the Greek Consul which the courts had imposed on the editor of Evagoras in Phoni tis Kyprou, "Anairesis" (Refutation), March 27, 1899.

831. Phoni tis Kyprou, "Anoikti epistoli" (An open letter), September 9, 1900.

presence of a number of roughs in the Archbishopric and that a police search had found 15 of them still hiding on the premises.⁸³²

The least hopeful of the lazzaroni of Nicosia were easily made to waver with material bribes, as well as with incitement to hatred. This was demonstrated when Katalanos was physically assaulted, and injured, on October 2, 1900. The policeman investigating the case reported that the attacker had probably acted as the agent of other persons and that he had failed to give more than a ludicrous reason for his action, because "his imagination was not sufficiently fertile".⁸³³ In a letter to the High Commissioner the leading Kitiakoi, protested that similar incidents had recently taken place and persistent acts had been observed, aiming to "excite the lowest ranks of society, and especially some idle persons, organised in bands, and loafing about in the streets after a premeditated rivalry".⁸³⁴ Some of these déclassés were swept into supporting the nationalist cause, though apparently becoming at the same time a source of itinerant violence, and embarrassment, within the ranks of the Kitiakoi. On

832. SA1:2923/1900, C. S. Cade, Local Commandant of Police, Nicosia, to A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, October 19, 1900. See also the report of Police Sergeant Ibrahim, of October 20, 1900, on these events.

833. SA1:2811/1900, See the report of A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, to Arthur Young, Chief Secretary, October 15, 1900.

834. Ibid., T. Theodotou and others to W. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, October 3, 1900.

October 17, 1900, the Chief Commandant of Police reported a violent row in Nicosia, which had been provoked "by one of the roughs attached to the Bishop of Kitium's supporters".⁸³⁵

Apart from these déclassés elements the Kyreniakoi drew considerable popular support from apprentices and journeymen, mostly those who were connected with the families of the established craftsmen and shopkeepers. These had after all been the targets of the celebrations of Saint Andreas' and Saint Spyridon's day for the past seven years. In an editorial on the electoral contest for special representatives in the capital, Katalanos described the political behaviour of these poor:

(Nicosia) lags behind the rest of the towns and most of the villages of Cyprus due to the multitude of simple-minded elements present in the lower social strata and which keep increasing in numbers by the constant drift of youths in the town. Being the capital and being also the most commercially developed of the island's towns it attracts the poorest elements of the rural population who, lacking any means of livelihood, seek their means of support in this town as servants and apprentices in various trades. Hence, society in Nicosia, in spite of its steady and promising progress, seems to be ever-lagging behind, given the numerous presence of elements wanting in education and experience and which can be easily deceived by temptations of any sort. The electoral contest which has just been completed has brought about the complete separation of the healthy and most developed citizens from the agglomeration of a crowd which labours and sleeps in kitchens, in taverns, in stables and in craft shops hidden above and below the ground. This lot are hardly able to earn their daily bread by toiling for several hours and are unable to improve themselves intellectually and spiritually owing to their total lack of knowledge and of willingness to learn.⁸³⁶

835. SA1:2923/1900, A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, October 17, 1900.

836. Evagoras, "I itta tis Lefkosias" (The defeat of Nicosia), September 7, 1900.

In spite of the partisan mode of expression there was a lot to be said for Katalanos' analysis. This section of the labouring poor, which was to prove very militant during the 1930s and 1940s, was at the turn of the century still largely dominated by the opinions of their masters and employers. At the same time, however, Katalanos had failed to mention the fact that, even though many of these youths might have entertained different opinions, they could hardly afford to air them, let alone vote accordingly in open ballot. Though the elections had assumed an intensely ideological character, they were still being fought on a terrain where clientelism and intimidation could be openly brought to bear on the electorate. Neither side would shrink from using such means where possible, though the Kyreniakoi had more opportunities to do so, given their superior wealth and vantage-point in the administrative structure.

One such instance, indicative of the way in which village commissions intervened in the political contest, had been the case of the prohibition against bearing weapons on the part of persons who had been convicted of criminal offences. An appeal against the prohibition would have to be supported by a certificate of good conduct from the village commission. Such a certificate could therefore be used to determine a voter's choice of candidate. During the fortnight prior to the October 14, 1901, election for the Legislative Council 40 inhabitants of Carpas applied for the lifting of the firearms' prohibition, their applications being supported by certificates of good conduct from

their village commissions. These papers were forwarded to the Chief Secretary by A. Liassides, in his capacity as member of the Legislative Council. Liassides enclosed his own certificates of good conduct, all of which he had prepared on the same day, October 5.⁸³⁷ The Chief Commandant of Police agreed grudgingly to consider further, only nine of these applications. The rest were rejected. In the case of three applicants from Ayios Andronicos, the Commandant pointed out that the prohibition against them should not be rescinded as they were very bad characters and were convicted of forcible abduction and rape.⁸³⁸

The intervention of A. Liassides in the case of these Carpas voters was typical of the terms in which the establishment of Nicosia conceived of their relations with the lower strata. The poor would be either clients in dependency or unthinking respectors of rank. Ceremony and paternalism, echoing the bygone system of estates and orders, were manifest in the activities of the Kyreniakoi. They were moreover suitably reported in their press, as if meant to reassure Nicosia's traditional elite of their

837. See accordingly:

a) SA1:2813/1901, A. Liassides to A. Young, Chief Secretary, October 5, 1901 (enclosing three applications from Coma Yialou);

b) SA1:2814/1901, as above, nine applications from Ayios Andronicos;

c) SA1:2824/1901, as above, five applications from Vathylaca;

d) SA1:2827/1901, as above, twenty applications from Leonarisso;

e) SA1:2835/1901, as above, three applications from Ayios Andronicos.

838. Ibid., A. E. Kershaw, Chief Commandant of Police, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, February 2, 1902.

pre-eminence and to remind common folk of their station. Hence the first anniversary of Orthodoxia was celebrated in Saint Savvas' church, on Sunday March 20, 1901, in a manner reminiscent of the old estate structures of Ottoman times. Mass was celebrated by the Bishop of Kyrenia in the presence of the members of the Holy Synod, who sat on a raised platform:

On the right of the Synod sat the devout priests of the town and suburbs, forming an entire company [λόχος ολόκληρος] and on the left sat the Mayor, the high school teachers and the men of science and letters. The people, of all sorts, occupied the middle corridor.⁸³⁹

The Kyreniakoi elite also revived ritualism in the performance of such functions as the distribution of charity. This effort was more pronounced in the free school meals offered to the poor pupils of the Gymnasium, which were inaugurated on February 3, 1901. According to Phoni tis Kyprou's reporting, the ceremony began with lectures delivered by teachers at the Gymnasium who were known supporters of the Kyreniakoi and by the President of the Municipal Commission, A. Liassides. Lectures were followed by national marches played by the municipality's band:

Immediately after this the pupils of the common meal, numbering forty, were ordered and took their places next to the tables which were laid in the room. The meal was preceded by a prayer, which was recited by the younger of the pupils and which was listened to by the rest, all of them standing. The pupils were then offered mutton soup, which several of those present were curious to taste, then they were given meat and finally fruit.⁸⁴⁰

839. Phoni tis Kyprou, "I epeteios tis 'Orthodoxias'" (The anniversary of Orthodoxia), March 24/9, 1901

840. Ibid., "I teleti ton engainion tou mathitikou syssitiou" (The inaugural ceremony of the pupils' mess), February 3, 1901.

This effort, to resurrect the pomp and theatre of a bygone age, was not a success. It was disallowed by the temper of the political contest in which, for the first time since the introduction of the system of free elections, extravagant and vicious personal attacks became habitual in election speeches and newspaper articles. Katalanos was a master in the witty criticism and savage ridicule of his opponents. Though they tried to reply in the same terms they could only get the worse of such an exchange. Ridicule was naturally much more painful when poured on respectable figures than on upstarts. Evagoras took the unprecedented step of using caricature as a political weapon, against no less a celebrity of public life than the President of Nicosia's Municipal Commission, A. Liassides. The ferocity of the attack on the establishment was viewed by contemporaries, and subsequent authors, as a manifestation of spite. That might be part of the explanation, though Katalanos is not known to have been a mean person in his private life. Ridicule was rather a dispassionate political weapon, for dismantling an edifice based on deference and obedience. Jokes at the expense of the establishment had hitherto been passed by word of mouth, for none dared put them on paper; the populace danced around the burning effigy, for it was only an effigy. Now the names of the rich and great were held up for ridicule in public, and they were demonstrably powerless to do anything about it. Libel proceedings, which were instituted on two occasions, though painful for Katalanos, could never undo the lasting damage inflicted upon those who staked their hegemony on

their paternal image. Rather than acts of a sick and sinister mind, these attacks were the crowning tactics of a strategy appropriate for a time when the labouring poor were still bowing in front of men with handsome coats.

The open defiance of Katalanos against the Greek establishment naturally also irritated the British. Reacting to Evagoras' charge of political bias in the granting of certificates by the Pancyprian Gymnasium, an infuriated Joshua Spencer, Inspector of Schools, wrote to the Chief Secretary that he intended to uphold the integrity of the examiners' board in public:

I think that, with His Excellency's permission, it would be well that I should state this in the Phoni tis Kyprou, which is a respectable paper, not recognizing the existence of the Evagoras, which is a wretched rag perpetually abusing everything that is done by the respectable portion of the Community.⁸⁴¹

Rank and inherited authority were on trial not only by the unruly lower orders but also by the educated members of the nationalist camp. On August 11, 1901, Enosis referred in dismay to the situation prevailing a few weeks prior to the Legislative Council elections: "In Larnaca youths who lay claims to a scientific education have been making calumnious insinuations... against respectable and highly-esteemed individuals".⁸⁴² The following week the newspaper reported that youths of superior education behaved in a manner appropriate to porters, hurling insults

841. SA1:2421/1900, J. Spencer, Inspector of Schools, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, August 28, 1900.

842. Enosis, "I symmoria kai ta opla tis" (The gang and their weapons), August 11/24, 1901.

against all strangers to the town, whom they considered as opposed to their convictions. These youths uttered, against honourable persons, words worthy only of children, morons and idiots. The editorial noted with horror the ultimate sign of disrespect: youths of noble descent, practising lawyers, had been jeering against their old school masters.⁸⁴³ The danger posed to establishment figures by young educated nationalists was indicated by the fact that their involvement in politics was becoming a central issue in Enosis' editorials:

Precisely at this juncture, when scores of young university graduates arrive from Athens...their eloquence is wasted prematurely in party political debates and festive oratory, through which they attack persons whose political conduct should be for them an example and a source of inspiration.⁸⁴⁴

III. The Hegemony of Nationalism

For all the appeals by the conservatives to religious orthodoxy and traditional values, nationalism was the terrain on which the main battle was being fought. On December 24, 1900, the Holy Synod, having refused to recognise the verdict of the archiepiscopal election, appealed to the British authorities to prevent the interference of the Eastern Patriarchates in the internal affairs of the Church of Cyprus. In so doing, the Synod

843. Ibid., "Edho ki ekei" (Here and there), August 18/31, 1901.

844. Ibid., "Akairos i politiki tis Kypriakis neolaias" (The untimely politics of Cypriot youth), October 21/4, 1901.

referred, for the first time in a very mild manner to the prospect of enosis. The ancient autonomy of the Church should be preserved

so that, when the hour will come that Cyprus may, with the pleasure of the Government of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, who God save, be annexed to the country with which she is nationally connected, Her Majesty's Government may be able to say: "I give her to you, having preserved intact the Privileges of her Church".⁸⁴⁵

The British had hardly left anything intact in the Church's privileges. Still the Primates of the Synod had to rely on the only power which, in the circumstances, could guarantee their position within the community. As in Ottoman times this was the alien occupying power. Now however, the call to help from the British would have to be made in terms so guarded, as not to alienate the mass of the population. Transmitting the Holy Synod's memorandum, the High Commissioner commented to the Secretary of State:

The matter has a political aspect. The party of the Bishop of Kitium has stimulated public feeling by strongly advocating Union with Greece. The party of the Bishop of Kyrenia are not able to resist the popular cry but say union with Greece can only be brought about with the willing consent of Great Britain. I read the concluding paragraph of the representation of the Holy Synod as framed so as not to offend what they believe is the popular feeling amongst the Greek-speaking Cypriots.⁸⁴⁶

845. CO 67/125, Kyrillos, Bishop of Kyrenia and the members of the Holy Synod to Sir W. F. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, December 30/13, 1900. Enclosure 1 in "Confidential", Sir W. F. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 24, 1900.

846. Ibid., Haynes-Smith to Chamberlain, December 24, 1900.

The appeal of Greek nationalism within the lower classes of Cyprus did not only have to be taken into account, but was now dictating the conduct and composure of the old establishment. On March 6, 1901, the High Commissioner reported to the Secretary of State:

(The) agitation keeps those who support the English administration under a species of terrorism, as if they attempt to support the British administration even in the most ordinary matters of Government, they are held up as traitors in the Greek press, and they and their families are subjected to a continued stream of abuse which is not infrequently of a most dirty character.⁸⁴⁷

Leaflets and posters were used for the first time in an election in Cyprus, thus testifying to the deeply political and ideological character assumed in a contest of this sort. These leaflets can give a good indication of the atmosphere and temper which were prevalent during the elections. Taking as a sample the constituency of Limassol and Paphos, the leaflets of the Kyreniakoi candidates generally promised to work for enosis, though stressing that until the achievement of this goal, they would concentrate on internal affairs and on administrative and financial issues. One candidate was Spyros Araouzos, a major merchant, son of Yangos Araouzos, who had during Ottoman rule been the greatest tax-farmer in Limassol. Another candidate, Michael Michaelides, was a merchant landowner. The leaflet, referring to the scale of his operations, noted that the entire district was

847. CO 67/127, "Confidential", W. F. Haynes-Smith, High Commissioner, to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, March 6, 1901.

rather pleased with him. The third candidate was a money-lender, perhaps the greatest in Paphos; hence, according to the leaflet, three fourths of the population of Paphos blessed his name. Finally, the leaflet gave a useful insight into the background of the leadership of each camp:

The people of Limassol and Paphos will vote for landowners, agriculturalists and merchants, who care for the land and whose interest is the interest of the district...The people have realised their interest and do not want to fill the Legislative Council with advocates, whose only wish is to increase the number of court cases.⁸⁴⁸

Indeed, apart from the Bishop of Kitium, heading the Kitiakoi ticket in the constituency, the other two candidates, Christodoulos Sozos and Joannis Kyriakides, were lawyers. Both of them were graduates of the University of Athens, freemasons and active participants in Limassol's economic and political life. Kyriakides had by then become something of a pioneer manufacturer, setting up the first iron foundry in the island. Sozos was in later life to become Mayor of Limassol, enlist as a volunteer in the Greek army in 1912 and be killed in Bizani.⁸⁴⁹ The leaflets for the Kitiakoi were more combative and stressed enosis and solidarity amongst the regime's opponents:

Hurrah for Enosis
Voters!
Your greatest enemy is the Government and its friends.
Today give a good slap to the Government and its friends.
Vote for those who fight the Government and its boys.

848. SA1:2846/1901, Loose flysheet in the file.

849. Coudounaris, Lexikon, op. cit., pp. 227-228.

Cast your vote in the ballot-box of the Saint of
Kitium*,⁸⁵⁰ Mr. Kyriakides and Mr. Sozos.⁸⁵¹

For the first time, the authorities were anxious about the possibility of violence erupting during elections. Hence, thoughts of facilitating voter participation by increasing the number of polling stations were abandoned, so that there would be no dilution in the number of policemen.⁸⁵² The intensity of the electoral campaign influenced wide strata of the population, inducing them to make a special effort, pay their vergi and sign on the electoral registers. The Commissioner of Paphos wrote to the Chief Secretary: "In view of its going to be a hotly contested poll, I beg that the number of voting tickets to be supplied to this District to be 10,000 instead of 4,000 previously applied for".⁸⁵³ In the event the total number of registered electors exploded from 14,763 in 1896 to 33,878 in 1901, recording an increase of more than 129%.⁸⁵⁴

850. * This was the customary way of referring to a metropolitan Bishop.

851. SA1:2846/1901, op. cit.

852. The Commissioner of Nicosia had proposed that security in each district should be reinforced by the temporary employment of discharged zaptiyes or well-conducted villagers (SA1:1728/1901, T. Chamberlain, Commissioner of Nicosia, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, September 22, 1901).

853. SA1:1728/1901, Clarence Wodehouse, Commissioner of Paphos, to Arthur Young, Chief Secretary, September 18, 1901.

854. For details of the 1901 election see SA1:1728/1901, "Return of Registered Voters".

In the elections the nationalists swept the board; none of the Kyreniakoi leaders were elected, not even P. Constantinides or A. Liassides. All nine Greek members of the new Legislative Council were leading Kitiakoi. The new temper of politics was summed up in a despatch of R. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol:

That the Hellenic idea should be developed in Cyprus was of course natural and inevitable, and those who are responsible for the publication of newspapers have found that such complete liberty is accorded to the press, that there is now no concealment whatever of views, but the policy of "Union with Greece" is advocated in the most open and pertinacious manner. And although it is true that the Greek Cypriots would prefer British rule to that of any other power, they now leave no opportunity of raising the cry for Union. But the mode of expression is very different to what it was a few years ago.⁸⁵⁵

Despite their victories in both the archiepiscopal and Legislative Council elections, the nationalists did not succeed in enthroning Kyrillos Papadopoulos as Archbishop. The old establishment, having still enough power and too much at stake, were able to prevent the enthronement of an elected Archbishop who was not of their choice. The issue was to drag on for a decade before the nationalists, supported by the majority of the Greeks of Cyprus, were to overcome the establishment's resistance and to impose the candidate of their choice on the throne.

855. CO 67/128, R. L. Michell, Commissioner of Limassol, to A. Young, Chief Secretary, November 8, 1901.

CHAPTER 13

CONCLUSION

I. The Rearguard Action of the Old Order

On the purely legal level the Ancien Regime was eliminated within weeks of the occupation. Everything which limited state authority disappeared: the superiority of the Turks as a ruling Millet, the privileges of the Prelates, the interposition of the tithe-farmers between Government and taxpayer. Colonialism was secular and based on the principle of equality between the island's inhabitants. The clergy's influence was seriously undermined by the authorities' refusal to acknowledge their customary privileges and the Church's ownership of large tracts of land. Obligatory dues had provided incomes which were quite significant as many establishments drew an important portion of their revenues from this source. No exaggeration can however be made in this respect; the clergy's landed foundations were not seriously shaken. Their property remained largely intact, although now utilised as property of a bourgeois-type, rid from feudal privileges. Similarly the old families of the lay Kocabasıs, in spite of the abolition of Iltizam, were able to retain most of their influence through their pre-eminence in commercial and money-lending activities. Finally the Greek ruling class of the Ottoman regime, lay and clerical, took care to keep as close to the British as the British would allow.

These factors provide only part of the explanation why the old establishment remained; ideology also played a crucial role in their continued pre-eminence. During the preceding Ottoman years the Greek establishment, though having at their disposal the naked force of the state, had at the same time invested heavily in gaining the consent of the population. The Bishops had never obtained this consent by crudely presenting themselves as God's representatives in Cyprus. On the contrary, Prelates and lay Kocabasıs legitimised their pre-eminence by discharging social functions in education and charity and by performing common activities in the administration of civil and judicial affairs. The fact that their hegemony had not been based on mere physical force meant that in 1878, when the protecting walls of the Ottoman state came down, trenches, moats and earthworks still lay beyond them. In the new and more liberal politics of the colonial period, when the consent of the population was essential in their continued pre-eminence, the old establishment continued to present their interests as the general interests of society as a whole.

On the part of the labouring poor, an apparent submission to the powers that be, was intertwined with a rebellious culture. True, by most descriptions of the poor during Ottoman rule, they had suffered and been through a lot and consented to more. Yet this was not so much the consequence of the Cypriot version of the "Paternal Exhortation", though the clergy did their best in this direction. Passivity in the face of naked and superior force

was never simply a fatalistic acceptance of their situation. Rather, the labouring poor had consented because they recognised the realities of their oppression and by accepting oppression they also altered it into something other and less oppressive than what it would otherwise have been. At the same time a popular and defiant culture was seething beneath the facade of passivity. The arrival of the British gave expression to an astonishingly rebellious disposition by those hitherto considered as subalterns, until the new framework of what was permissible was set.

The new equilibrium however was not more stable than the previous one. Labour became more independent with the decline of the ciftlik system, the final weathering of the esnafs and the creation of a multitude of new employment opportunities. The occupation brought in its wake the hardening of private property in the soil and increased security for the smallholder. At the same time heavy taxation and usury drove a further wedge between the Government and merchant money-lenders on one side and the lower classes on the other. Some of the labouring poor allowed themselves to be ground down in disease, drunkenness and a laxity of morals. Deviant behaviour however was a sign of both demoralisation and resistance. Primitive forms of opposition abounded during the gradual breakdown of the world of the poor, drawing their inspiration from the era when the rural masses took no part in political affairs: violation of forestry regulations, attacks

on tax-collectors, wanton destruction of property and above all the phenomenon of banditry, which captured the imagination of broad strata of the labouring poor.

These developments alarmed the upper classes and the clergy, who advocated the suppression of all forms of defiance by those who would not abide by the establishment's image of paternal responsibilities. Appeals to the coercive power of the state were as ever doubled up by efforts to exact the labouring poor's consent and willing subservience. At the same time the conservative establishment attempted to draw a line between the casual residuum and the respectable section of labour. Though preaching was essential to both, bamboozling into their station was the major component in the remedy prescribed for the former. The latter were deemed worthy of modest ceremonies, in which religion loomed large. Rural areas, because of the sparseness of their settlements, were more open to the influence of the clergy. Therefore the impact of the conservative counter-attack, in the form of religious preaching, cannot be overestimated, especially in the districts of Nicosia and Kyrenia where faith was very strong; there the people were catechized by increasingly larger numbers of priests and laymen who exploited the pious feelings of the peasantry to stir them up against the new and nationalist bourgeoisie.

Opposition to the status quo was however increasingly being manifested in politically more coherent and modern forms. A movement was gradually being moulded by the spread of Greek educa-

tion, an anti-government press and the intervention of a new and nationalist middle class, whose most eloquent representatives were the freemasons. The upsurge of reason, epitomised in Katalanos' lectures, sapped the ideological foundations of the established order. Nationalism, engulfing the lower strata, was at the same time a force dislodging the pro-government elite, from their position of ideological hegemony, which they had enjoyed since the days of the Tanzimat. Though the establishment tried to contain pressures from below by marching along with the prevailing nationalist sentiment, the terms of the conflict were increasingly set by their opponents. Greece's war efforts against the Turks in 1896-1897 stirred the patriotic feelings of the lower strata, which were manifested by a flow of volunteers to the Greek armed forces. Reading clubs, specifically meant for the labouring classes, were instrumental in the struggle against the conservative establishment. The new middle classes won two consecutive elections, demonstrating convincingly that nationalism and not religion was to be the ideology according to which issues would have to be settled thereafter.

II. Class and Nation in the Popular Movement

Though by the turn of the century the lower strata had achieved a degree of political and ideological emancipation they were not as yet capable of imagining what rights they could exercise; to them the new middle classes, with their powerful economic base and especially their intellectual superiority

seemed, until the end of World War I, quite naturally to be the only source of leadership. Of the nationalist leaders of the period, the freemasons, re-emerging in Cyprus after three quarters of a century, were the most radical. Their leadership brought cohesion to the anti-government forces through a common rhetoric and a broad correspondence of experience, specified through the mass circulation of the nationalist press. This ideological unity delivered the materials from which a national and popular movement was built.

It is possible to discern the social dimension of the conflict, which had begun within the framework of the Archiepiscopal Question. The Kyreniakoi were led by the Prelates and the major merchant money-lending families of Nicosia, Famagusta, Kyrenia and, to a lesser extent, Larnaca and Limassol. Behind them were the majority of clergymen, monks in particular, and the established shopkeepers and tradesmen. A large section of the indebted peasantry, the most demoralised of the labouring poor and the lazzaroni of the towns formed the mass support of the camp. At the head of the Kitiakoi were the new town-bourgeoisie and nationalist intelligentsia. Their support came mainly from the plebeian strata, the petty tradesmen and traders, who had literally flooded the bazaars and were in constant friction with the authorities and the established merchants. The camp encompassed a multitude of journeymen and other miscellaneous poor who, having received the rudiments of education, were largely

emancipated from the influence of the clergy. Finally, sections of the lower peasantry, particularly in villages close to the towns, were supporters of the nationalist camp.

The powers of the lay and clerical elite in influencing the lives and expectations of the lower strata were still formidable. The Kyreniakoi resorted widely to clientelist practices in the political contest; circumstances of poverty helped them draw support from the growing mass of demoralised poor. The struggle was also being waged in earnest in the ideological field. In the confused and changing situation of the turn of the century, the political choices confronting the labouring poor were not so clear-cut. Claims on their loyalties were many and competing and though the radical nationalists presented themselves as the true defenders of the people's cause their self-assessments were not always accepted at face value; after all their ranks were ridden with bourgeois figures who, though newcomers to the class, were still part of it. Their claims in any case were vigorously disputed by the establishment press in the name of political tradition, religious orthodoxy and regional loyalty.

The Cypriots therefore were not the chosen people who marched like one man toward their nationhood and statehood. Nationalism, as the ideology of the plebs, inspired new genres. In these circumstances expression became charged with a new and emotive force and cherished words like the "fatherland", or execrated words like "tyranny" and "slavery", seemed almost transfigured. Most of all, the word "nation" [ἔθνος] had been injected with a new

sense: it was now equivalent to the whole social organism. There were no more orders; everything which was Greek, from language to architecture, helped constitute the nation. The word received an added dimension of meaning from the deeply felt and enthusiastic impulses and the spontaneous collective emotions which an assault against the old order inspires.

Hence, though no social demands were put forward, enosis nationalism, in the context of the last quarter of the 19th century, was not a socially neutral ideology. On the contrary, its most important feature was the establishment of national unity through an alliance against the last vestiges of the old order. The nationalist fervour which took hold of the labouring poor swept the entire island taking no account of the distinctive claims of status and rank. Upon the jostle of nationalism popular protest was transformed into a movement. By the turn of the century enosis, in a way that was denied to religion, brought into political action classes which had hitherto been below and outside the political system.

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